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MARVEL VISION #2
February 1996

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Ooops! Dept. Due to an oversight, certain legal type was inadvertently left out of our first issue's indicia. This should have been in there so get out your scissors and glue and add this: Superboy, Superman, Flash, Shazam, Aquaman, Robin, Wonder Woman, Batman, Lobo, Green Lantern, Catwoman, Killer Croc, Black Adam, Firestorm, Bane, and The Spectre are Trademark and Copyright © 1995 DC Comics. All rights reserved.

Editorial Espousals

Issue #1 is just a fleeting thought in my mind. As you read this, The VISION office is hard at work on issue #3. That's the nature of monthly publishing—as many as three issues can be in different stages of development at one time.

If this is your first issue, then welcome aboard. If it's your second, then you've noticed a slight change in the format of this tome. This issue is sixteen pages lighter than #1. The reasons for this are quite simple. First: we actually wanted to give you a "Special First Issue," not one of those so-called specials. Second: we want to refine the way this magazine is produced and see just how far we can push the envelope for hot, exciting design work. Hopefully in '96 we'll be able to give you an eighty-page issue again... EVERY MONTH!

Unfortunately, with this format change we have to alternate some of our regular features but don't worry, you'll still get them. Next month, the Toy Biz article on the GHOST RIDER action figures will appear as well as "Artist vs. Artist." Also returning will be our second installment of the "History of Marvel." If you can't wait that long for your history fix and you've got cable TV, then check out A&E the week of December 25th-29th. Our own Stan "The Man" Lee will be featured as part of that channel's ongoing Biography series.

Some VISION office notes before we get on with the good stuff. It is with deep regret that with this issue the VISION staff bids farewell to our original Managing Editor, Spencer Lamm. Spence has moved over to Marvel Music and we wish him well. Replacing him is former Editorial Assistant Tom Rolston.

As far as what's going on at Marvel: Be sure to check out the rumblings over in the 2099 Universe, Doom's up to his old tricks. Why am I wearing scuba gear? Well in this issue we're going to go back to an early tale of the Sub-Mariner. I thought I'd look the part of a fish. Of course there's stuff happening all over the Marvel Universe but don't take my word for it, check it out.

See ya in the funny pages.

TIM TUOHY

Write to: Marvel Vision
c/o Marvel Comics
387 Park Avenue South
New York NY 10016

M • A • R • V • E • L
VISION

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IN TODAY'S FASHION SECTION: HOT NEW LOOKS FROM THE WASP!

THE DAILY BUGLE

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 14, 1995 / Sunny, high 30s/ Tomorrow, sunny, mid 30s/ Details, Page 24 50¢

CHIEF OF POLICE MURDERED:

SPIDER-MAN AND "NEW" PUNISHER SOUGHT BY POLICE

By Ben Urich

NYC Police Chief Vince Williams was found dead in his apartment this morning, the victim of an apparent gangland style execution. The body was discovered at 6:30 a.m. by Williams' house cleaner and was declared D.O.A. at New York's Beth Israel Hospital. The Daily Bugle learned from Williams' neighbors that the superhuman known as Spider-Man and a second individual wearing an outfit similar to the one once worn by the Punisher were spotted in the vicinity that evening. The second individual has not been identified, and it is not clear why he was wearing an outfit identical to that worn by Frank Castle, the vigilante who was executed by the state earlier this year.

"Chief Williams was killed in a heinous and cowardly manner. He was shot in the back of the head at close range—the favored style of organized crime hits. As Chief-of-Police, Vince had many enemies, but rest assured, the killer will be brought to justice," stated NYPD Spokesperson Dennis Sipowitz at a press conference this morning.

"Reports of Spider-Man's involvement, and allegations of the existence and appearance of a second Punisher, are being investigated as we speak," Sipowitz continued. "Spider-Man's connection to the murder is unclear, but certain facts of the case call into doubt his direct involvement. He is, however, along with this so-called 'new' Punisher, wanted for questioning. If this second Punisher committed this cowardly act in an attempt to build a reputation, he, like Frank Castle before him, will pay the ultimate price for his crimes."

CONTINUED IN SPIDER-MAN/PUNISHER PART 1

EXPLOSION ROCKS TIMES SQUARE— MUTANTS INVOLVED?

Exclusive By Bill Rosemann

An underground explosion rocked the Times Square area Friday evening, resulting in a prolonged midtown power outage and extensive property damage. Paramedics and police responded quickly, and immediately evacuated the surrounding area. The cause of the blast is unknown at this time. Authorities have not declared this an act of terrorism, but the Daily Bugle staff has received unconfirmed reports that the mutant group known as the Morlocks may have been responsible.

"It was horrible. There was smoke and fire everywhere—people were screaming and running in panic," said Ali Farrell, a pedestrian who was in the area at the time of the blast.

A preliminary search of the underground area revealed no evidence of an explosive device. Investigators did, however, discover a cavernous cathedral-type space beneath the subway system, where it is believed the blast originated. City Public Works' spokespeople speculated that this area may have been inhabited by a number of the city's homeless population who had maintained a permanent existence in the tunnels. However, an unnamed source within the police department reported that the area may have housed the Morlocks, a group of self-exiled mutants who were rumored to have lived under the city streets for many years.

CONTINUED IN STORM #1

TWO TIN MEN TUSSLE:

IRON MAN TESTS HIS METTLE AGAINST ARMORED ASSAILANT

By Ken Elliot

The armored adventurer known as Iron Man engaged a similarly armored individual in a lengthy battle on the grounds of the Avengers Mansion late last night. Coming on the heels of the Avengers' mysterious battle to enter their own headquarters, the U.N. has increased pressure on President Clinton to increase U.S. monitoring of the "Earth's Mightiest Heroes."

"The situation has been dealt with in accordance with Avengers' protocol. We did what was necessary to apprehend a threat to the city we've sworn to protect. Be assured, when the world is endangered, the Avengers stand ready," stated team co-founder Henry Pym (a.k.a. Giant Man) after the incident.

Members of the Avengers, including Captain America and Thor, and the West Coast based super group known as Force Works were also present during the battle. It is not known whether the super soldier and the thunder god have returned to active duty with the Avengers, which would mark the first time in nearly a decade that Captain America, Thor and Iron Man served as full-time members simultaneously.

CONTINUED IN IRON MAN #325

RANDOLPH HINES' "MYSTERY VISION" LABELED "ADDICTIVE"

By Betty Brant

The National Organization of Parental Educators today leveled a blistering condemnation of the newly formed Mystery Vision cable network. N.O.P.E. accused Randolph Hines, the network owner and enigmatic media entrepreneur, of broadcasting "twisted and offensive material" which is "a danger to society" and "addictive by nature."

"We are taking a stand as concerned citizens and responsible parents by demanding that the Mystery Vision network shut down operations immediately. Each American child witnesses over 10,000 acts of violence by the time he or she is 14 years old. If Mr. Hines has his way, that number will increase exponentially. We are further troubled by the fact that the network may be using a signal which can both physically and psychologically addict viewers, and that is clearly unacceptable, if not illegal," N.O.P.E. Spokesperson Robert Dickinson announced at a press conference earlier today.

CONTINUED IN SENSATIONAL SPIDER-MAN #1

CAPTAIN AMERICA: TRAITOR?

—U.P.I.

A man claiming to be Captain America and the international terrorist known as the Red Skull invaded a military outpost outside of Albuquerque, New Mexico late last night. Due to the announcement of the patriot's death last week, authorities have launched an investigation to determine whether this individual actually was the legendary super soldier. "Despite reports of his demise, a civilian in a costume identical to the one worn by Captain America attacked Fort Macchio alongside the Red Skull and a third unidentified individual. However, given that he battled through a battalion of soldiers points towards a positive ID." said Lieutenant R. Andrew Ball, US Army spokesperson.

"The most serious charges leveled against this person involve his direct contact with General Jack Chapman. General Chapman was under direct orders from the President of the United States to protect the base from intrusion. The General warned him that any aggressive action would brand him a traitor to the nation. The fact that he disobeyed these orders and subsequently attacked the General will not be taken lightly," Ball added.

CONTINUED IN CAPTAIN AMERICA #448

WOLVERINE

Wolverine—he's the best there is at what he does, but what he does isn't very nice.

It is, however, very popular. Ever since he first appeared in a 1974 issue of **INCREDIBLE HULK** (issue #180, to be exact), Wolverine has become more popular than any other X-Man. After making numerous appearances in various Marvel titles, as well as his core member role in the **UNCANNY X-MEN**, the man with the adamantium skeleton was given a limited series in 1982. The series, by Chris Claremont, Frank Miller and Joe Rubinstein, established Wolverine as a major player in the Marvel Universe. Six years later the first issue of the monthly series came out.

In March of 1996, the **WOLVERINE** series will turn 100! How did the book that bears his name make it that far in just over eight years' time, a time during which the comics industry went boom and then bust? What's the secret of his success?

Wolverine was created by Roy Thomas, John Romita Sr. and Len Wein, with more than a little help from the legendary Herb Trimpe. This group laid the groundwork for a character whose charm was that he had no charm. The mutant also known as "Logan" rapidly became the most adored member of the **X-MEN**. A position he maintains to this day.

Like everyone else, Wolverine had his problems and, like everyone else, he didn't always know how to deal with them. Unlike everyone else, however, he had a skeleton made of adamantium, which is a practically indestructible metal and the hardest known alloy in the Marvel Universe. This, in addition to a natural powerful mutant healing factor made him quite formidable.

He wasn't a very likely-seeming super hero from the start. A few inches taller than the average jockey (5'4") and as big around as an Angus steer, he was gifted with extremely low self-esteem and a heart the size of his native country, Canada, despite the loner image he preferred to cultivate. He quickly grew mutton chop sideburns and out of costume, dressed as a lumberjack might. In short, he wasn't typical in any sense of the word.

It wasn't long before Wolvie showed the stuff of which comic book legends are made. In the very first issue of **WOLVERINE**, the limited series, our hero managed to slay a crazed grizzly bear, brought to justice the hunter responsible for its condition, and trekked to Japan where he fought for and lost (temporarily) the love of one woman (Mariko, his first true love), and gained the companionship of another (Yukio).

Since the establishment of **WOLVERINE** in 1988, Wolvie's been firebombed, shot, slashed, poisoned and blown up. He's also lost his adamantium. In **X-MEN #25**, the precious alloy was forcibly removed by Magneto, who accomplished the "impossible" task by sucking the metal out directly through Wolvie's pores. In the process...Wolverine's healing factor was temporarily destroyed. It was at this point that Wolvie made a startling discovery—his

AAARRRGGGHHH!

By Polly Watson

claws were not pure adamantium. They were bone. And now that his skeleton was stripped of its protective adamantium sheath, Wolverine began to revert to his more natural, animalistic form.

Letters from distraught fans began pouring in from all over the world. Would Wolverine still be Wolverine without his adamantium? Could he survive for even one issue with bone claws that came out with a slow, painful SHLUPP instead of a sharp, deadly SNIKT? Could he still be the best at what he did?

Well, it turns out that he could. Since then, our hero has managed to fend off the snake-armed Lady Deathstrike (WOLVERINE #77) and the fearsome Sabretooth (WOLVERINE #90). And readers who follow Wolvie's exploits know that he's finally bested his most powerful enemy, the adamantium-skinned Cyber, who came to a grisly end in WOLVERINE #96.

Despite the fact that what Wolverine does best is engage in fierce hand-to-hand combat with opponents who appear to dwarf him in both strength and size, he is far from being a one-dimensional character. When he's not besting a powerful opponent or tearing up miles of blacktop on his motorcycle, he's working full-time as a heart-breaker, although the heart that usually sustains the most damage is his own.

The most recent damage inflicted on that tender organ was not caused by the loss of a lover but rather by the loss of a friend. In WOLVERINE #75, stripped of his adamantium and convinced that he could no longer be of any use to the X-Men, Wolverine left the Xavier Institute and his beloved Jubilee behind.

Jubilee was introduced in UNCANNY X-MEN #244, and made her first appearance in the pages of WOLVERINE in issue #40. A vibrant, outgoing teenager with mutant powers (the ability to release energy plasmoids), she had also known pain and suffering in her brief lifetime, which, combined with her tenacious and impulsive nature, made her a perfect side-kick for the brooding Wolverine. Editor Bob Harras candidly admits that she is his favorite supporting character in the WOLVERINE book.

Veteran WOLVERINE colorist Marie Javins (and several other Marvel staff members who shall remain nameless) admitted to crying over Logan's farewell note to Jubilee in issue #75. The tear-jerker prompted a huge response from anxious fans who wanted to know when she and Wolverine would be reunited. Following the "Age of Apocalypse", he rejoined the X-MEN, and in WOLVERINE #94, the wandering mutantwalked from New York City to a cabin in Massachusetts at Jubliee's bidding,but left again by issue's end.

One of the major factors in WOLVERINE's success has been the talented creative teams that have determined the book's trajectory over the years. WOLVERINE has been written and drawn by some of the best in the business, including Bill Sienkiewicz, Klaus Janson, John Buscema, Mark Silvestri, Gene Colan, Jo Duffy and Al Williamson, in addition to those already mentioned.

The current creative team is made up of writer Larry Hama, who's been on the book so long he can barely remember his first issue ("I think it was issue 32! "), penciler Adam Kubert, and inker Dan Green. The group is under the watchful (if twitchy) eye of editor Harras, who has been with the series from the start. He keeps a bubble gum machine filled with aspirin in his office.

Obviously, these guys love what they do. Kubert, whose favorite issue was WOLVERINE #90, which featured a brawl between Wolvie and Sabretooth that sprawled across a series of breathtaking gatefold pages ("I wanted them to be as biiiiig as I could make them, so...!"), has been a regular on the book since the now-legendary issue #75. Green left the already successful X-MEN in 1990 to work on WOLVERINE full-time.

So what's going to happen next? Will Jubilee return to his side? Will he get the adamantium back? Will Sabretooth come after him? Is Cyber really and truly dead?

According to Harras, the advent of WOLVERINE's 100th issue will spawn a Wolverine unlike any readers have ever seen before, and unlike any they have ever known, as he will be undergoing psychological changes as well. Writer Hama expands upon this information:

"It turns out that the adamantium was the thing that all this time kept [Wolverine] from becoming totally feral, which is the very thing that he feared most. So when it was taken out, he starts physically regressing, and he's just now realizing that this isn't so bad!"

Neither Hama nor Harras will say whether Wolverine will be regaining his adamantium-cloaked skeleton anytime soon. They are equally close-mouthed regarding the fate of Jubilee. Harras, also has nothing to say about Cyber's recent demise, except that it wasn't a particularly dignified exit.

So it looks like WOLVERINE #100 is going to be a surprise party— those are usually the wildest kind! And this one will be engineered by "team WOLVERINE"—they're the best at what they do!

HISTORY OF WOLVERINE

INCREDIBLE HULK #180-181 (Oct.-Nov. 1974): As Weapon X, Wolverine first battles the Hulk and Wendigo.
GIANT-SIZE X-MEN #1 (1975): Wolverine quits Canada's Department H and joins the X-Men.
UNCANNY X-MEN #118 (Feb. 1979): Wolverine first meets Mariko Yashida.
UNCANNY X-MEN #137 (Sept. 1980): Wolverine participates in trial by combat over Phoenix's life.
UNCANNY X-MEN #162 (Oct. 1982): Wolverine destroys a Brood alien that attempted to take over his body.

UNCANNY X-MEN #173 (Sept. 1983): Under Mastermind's influence, Mariko calls off her wedding to Wolverine.
UNCANNY X-MEN #181 (May 1984): Wolverine rescues the young Japanese girl Amiko and promises to raise her as his daughter.

CLASSIC X-MEN #10 (June 1987): Recounts Wolverine's first clash with Sabretooth after joining the X-Men.
WOLVERINE #10 (Aug. 1989): Flashback showing battle between the young Wolverine and Sabretooth after Sabretooth murdered Wolverine's lover, Silver Fox, apparently an implanted memory.
UNCANNY X-MEN #268 (Late Nov. 1990): Flashback to Wolverine's first meeting with Captain America and the future Black Widow, then a child, during World War II.
FANTASTIC FOUR #347 (Dec. 1990): Wolverine joins "second" Fantastic Four organized by the Skrull De'Lila.

MARVEL COMICS PRESENTS #72-84 (1991): "Weapon X" storyline showing how the mysterious Professor implanted the adamantium in Wolverine's skeleton.
X-MEN (second series) #5-7 (Feb.-April 1992): Revelation that Wolverine, Sabretooth, and Maverick were partners working for the CIA in the early 1960s, when Wolverine and Sabretooth began their feud.
X-MEN (second series) #25 (Oct. 1993): Magneto removes the adamantium from Wolverine's body.
WOLVERINE #75 (Nov. 1993): Wolverine temporarily leaves the X-Men and begins reverting to a more feral state; Wolverine's claws are revealed to be made of bone.
WOLVERINE #90 (Feb. 1995): Wolverine returns to the X-Men and battles Sabretooth, inflicting brain damage on him.

The World's Greatest Earthworm Gets his own comic!

Imagine, you're home one day, nestled into a freshly dug burrow, digesting your daily amount of dirt, when something goes bump in the night. (It's always night to you, you live underground. Duh!) You squirm your way up and out into the fresh air, hoping that some bird isn't going to make a meal out of you, and it's at that moment you know your life is never going to be the same.

Right before your eyes (if you had eyes, that is) lies the key to unlimited power. Never again will you have to fear becoming fish bait, or even more despicable, crow food. In front of you is an ultra-high-tech, indestructible, super space-cyber suit. Could it be the gift from above you've always needed to avenge all your relatives that have been slurped, spaghetti-like, by some mean old crow, or was it an accident that brought this awesome power to your doorstep? (Bet on the accident part.) In a not-so-distant part of space the evil Queen Slug-For-A-Butt came down with a good case of butterfingers and allowed the suit to fall to earth. (Told ya to bet on accident!)

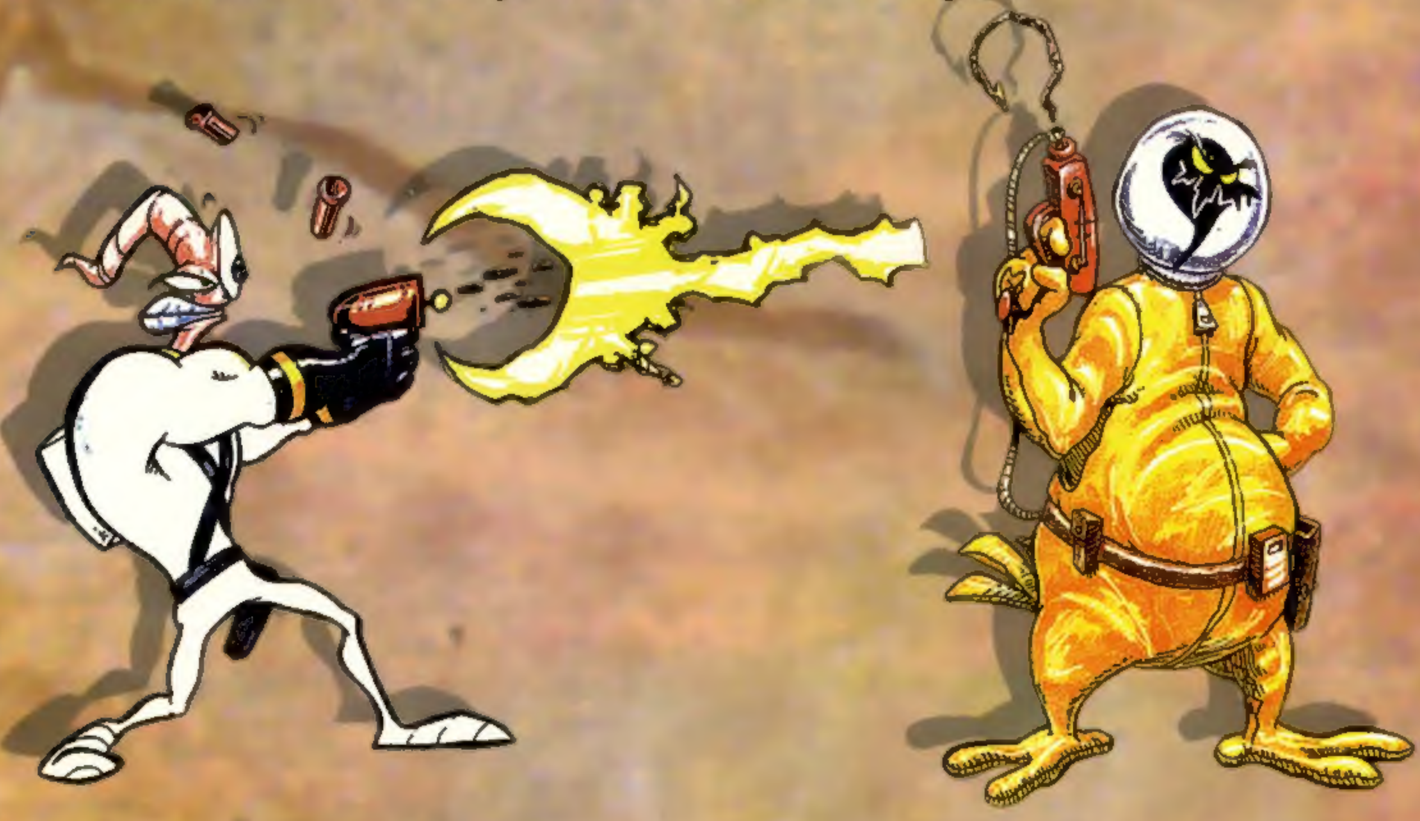
But at first you think, "I'm only a worm!" Well not any more. Now you're EARTHWORM JIM, savior of the galaxy and whoever else is out there. You squirm into the suit, power up and away you go! Where you're headed you have no idea, but the forces of Psy-Crow are out there and they need their butts kicked. With Snott at your side you are ready to battle evil anywhere in the galaxy.

> "If you love the game and if you love the cartoon, you are really going to love this series!"

Only a short time ago, Earthworm Jim exploded its way onto home gaming systems, introducing this brand new, segmented super hero. It wasn't until recently that Jim's adventures entered a new medium and were brought to life on Saturday morning cartoons and now, in the pages of Marvel Comics' own EARTHWORM JIM: THE COMIC BOOK. This three-issue limited series is on sale everywhere and anywhere comics are sold. Inside these pages, Jim stops a shotgun wedding, gets captured with Princess What's-Her-Name, goes cow tipping, faces the court from heck and other stuff so strange you'd stand there and say, "No way?!"

"I'm very passionate about this character," says writer Dan Slott who scribes this epic tale for Marvel. "If you love the game and if you love the cartoon, you are really going to love this series!" Barry Crain adds his artistic wizardry to bring Dan's words to life. Dan is a veteran of the humorous side of the comic book industry. But how does someone bring a character like Earthworm Jim to life on comic book pages and make it something everybody wants to read? "Pack as much stuff in as you can, use the entire cast and get a great artist!" says Dan, and Marvel has done just that. This new series will add to your enjoyment of the EARTHWORM JIM universe.

How did all this Earthworm Jim craziness begin? He was born at SHINY ENTERTAINMENT for Playmates Interactive and began his career as one of the best video games to come around in a long time.



It's not your usual side-scrolling game. You move side to side, up and down, back and forth and sometimes in and out of Monstrous Peter Puppy's mouth. Humor intensifies the game's enjoyability, something other games have tried and failed at. The attention paid to details in Jim's facial expressions, from excruciating pain to the pleasure felt "Grooovy" after completing each level are extraordinary. Even the sound effects as Jim is plastered against some rock, or his screams when Chuck's dog Fifi, tries to rip his legs off are a direct complement to the visuals. Another complement to the visuals in the game are the incredible action figures produced by Playmates. Each of these figures comes with a full assortment of weapons and various other nasties.

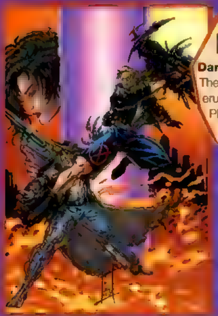
Well, now that you've played the game, watched the cartoon, read the comic book and bought the toys, what's left? Nothing! And that's the beauty of it. The only thing anyone can do is come up with something new. And there is: Available in November, Earthworm Jim2, the second video game based on our segmented hero. This time you engage the bad guys with your pal Snott, who sleeps in your backpack until he's needed. The two of you fight your way through ten new worlds: Anything But Tangerines, Level Ate and Utterly Abducted are just a few of the places you'll encounter the forces of Psy-Crow and even a few new baddies. Like a fire-breathing steak. (Steak from a cow, not a tree.)

Go play the game. Go watch the TV show! Go read the comic!

The story behind EWJ 2 is similar to the first one. This time, the princess is stolen away right in front of you by Psy-Crow. The objective, simple: save the princess to ease that lonely pain in your heart, keep from getting shot, splattered, roasted, and avoid the IRS (Intergalactic Revenue Service). And to do all this you get to use five new, even more powerful ray guns, a Snott parachute and Snott swing.

Here's a little inside information. The people over at Playmates Interactive have informed us that an EARTHWORM JIM MOTION PICTURE is in the works. The script is currently in development and nothing more can be said at this time, so quit nagging for more! Go play the game. Go watch the TV show! Go read the comic!

—Tom Rolston



Comix Zone no.4
Dan Shaheen/Joyce Chin/Abraham Madison
The adventure based on Sega's hit video game continues as the final battle erupts! Does Sketch defeat Morus? Do he and Roadkill make it home? Plus: pinups and game tips! *(Shipping in 2/13/96)*

Disney Comic Hits no.7
Sheryel Scarborough & Kayte Koch /Cosme Quartieri/Khato
Starring Timon & Pumbaa from *"The Lion King!" (Shipping 2/27/96)*

Doctor Who no.236
Gary Russell/Martin Geraghty
A massive radioactive cloud is spreading across 21st Century Europe, and even the Doctor may be powerless to stop it. *(Shipping 2/27/96)*

Doctor Who Poster Magazine no.9
Various
In "The Pyramids of Mars," the Doctor and Sarah confront an ancient Egyptian god in 1911 England. *(Shipping 2/9/96)*

Beavis & Butt-Head no.26
Glenn Herdling/Rick Parker
Inspired by the Pope's visit, Beavis & Butt-Head become altar boys! Will these little devils become angels? When Hell freezes over! *(Shipping 2/27/96)*

Gargoyles no.15
Mort Todd/ Amanda Conner/ Alberto Saichann
Goliath, Elisa and Bronx return to the Big Apple to face the threat of an amazing new menace. *(Shipping 2/27/96)*

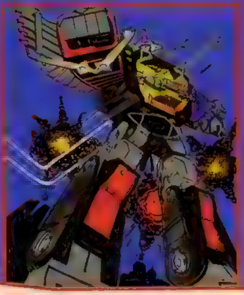
Barbie no.64
Barbara Slate & Lisa Trusiani/ Mary Wilshire/Barb Kaalberg
This special February issue celebrates Black History Month & Valentine's Day. Your buddies at Comic Shop News say, "every girl who's owned a Barbie is likely to enjoy an issue of Marvel's licensed BARBIE series." *(Shipping 2/13/96)*

MCA Saturday Morning Cartoon's Greatest Hits: The Comic no.1
Cover by Bill Sienkiewicz
Ralph Saul/Various
THE OFFICIAL TIE-IN TO THE MEGA-HIT MCA ALBUM! An epic tale of time-travel, world domination, and your favorite Saturday morning cartoon music! Written by super-star album producer Ralph Saul, and illustrated by: Mike Allred, Kieron Dwyer, Steve Lightle, Paul Mounts and more! Look inside for guest appearances by Liz Phair, The Ramones, Sponge, Matthew Sweet and oceans of alterna-rockers! Plus: info on the 100 free CD contest! Pass the Lucky Charms & let's rock! *(Back Ships in January)*

Titles from General Entertainment shipping in February

adventure action

Nightmare Circus no.4
Painted Cover by Dennis Calero
Mark Paniccia/The Pander Brothers
Continuing the saga based on Sega's hot video game—with secret tips and an interview with the game's designer, Max Taylor! Raven must defeat the hellishly warped performers of Circo del Diablo in a battle to the death! Will he be able to defeat the Jester, the evil power that possesses them? *(Shipping in 2/27/96)*



Saban's Mighty Morphin Power Rangers no.6
Fabian Nicieza/Ron Lim/Jim Sanders III
Earth, wind & fire live! Can the Rangers weather an attack by Lord Zed's elemental creatures? Two morphinomenal stories, puzzles, pinups & games! *(Shipping 2/6/96)*

Casper no.1
Angelo DeCesare/Bill White/Jorge Pacheco
THE FIRST ISSUE STARRING THE GHOST WITH THE MOST! The movie was just the beginning, now Casper has his own cartoon on the Fox Network—and his very own comic! Join Casper, Kat, Doc Harvey and the Ghostly Trio for a hauntingly good time! *(Shipping 2/6/96)*

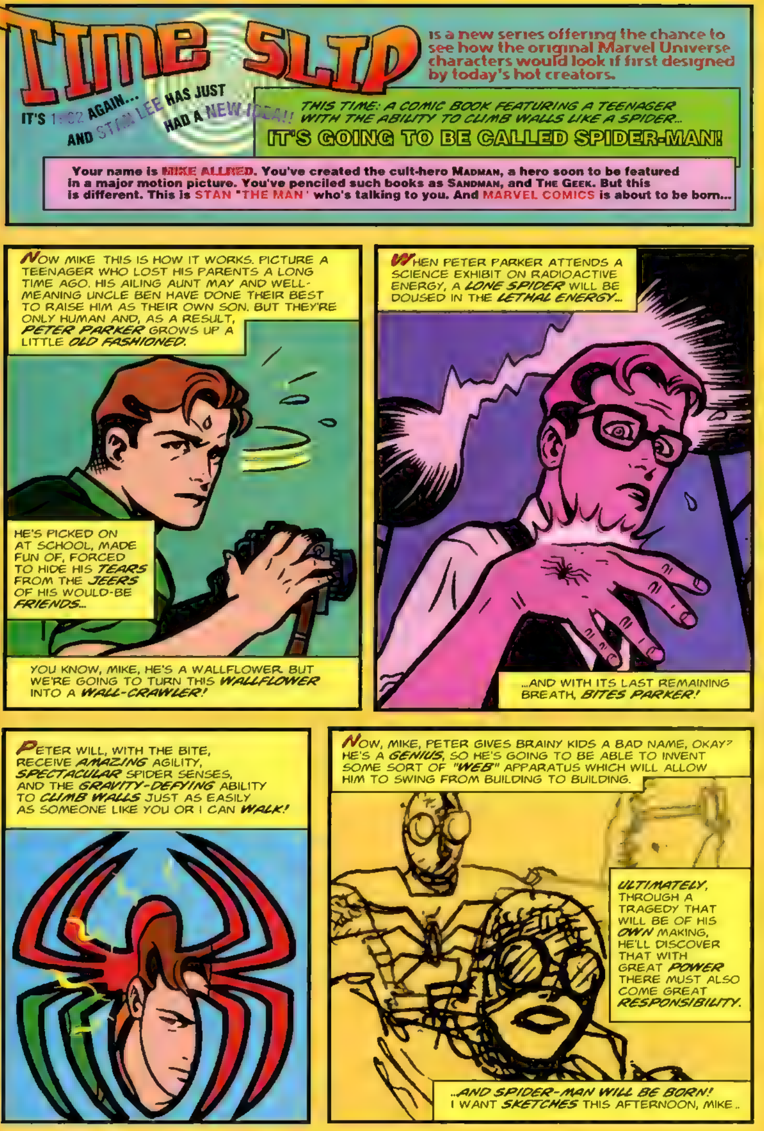
Conan the Savage no.9
Painted Cover by Tom Grindberg
Chuck Dixon/Alcatena
Two face-smashing stories! Chuck (Detective Comics) Dixon pits Conan against man-eating tigers, flesh-eating worms, and barbarian-hating debutantes! *(Shipping 2/27/96)*

Conan no.9
Dan Abnett/Joe Bennett/Tom Palmer
Conan is all alone in the wilderness, surrounded by 300 blood-thirsty cannibals! Better feel sorry for those cannibals! Joe Bennett & Tom Palmer bring a modern look to the Hyborean Age sword-slinger. *(Shipping 2/6/96)*

Saban's Mighty Morphin Power Rangers/Vr Troopers no.5
Fabian Nicieza/Tod Smith/Mark McKenna
Grab your umbrellas, Lord Zed has transformed a mild-mannered student into a wicked weather witch! Plus: an action-packed adventure with TV's new hot-shots, the VR Troopers! *(Shipping 2/27/96)*

Ren & Stimpy no.41
Terry Collins/Gary Fields & Barry Dutter/Matt Maley
When Ren takes a job as a stock boy at the local supermarket, there'll be clean-ups on every aisle! *(Shipping 2/6/96)*

Masked Rider no.1
Frank Lovece/Newbaum Turk/Jim Sanders III
SABAN'S NEW POWER HOUSE FLIPS INTO HIS OWN COMIC! The star of the top-rated TV show uses his talking motorcycle & turbo-charged car in his never-ending battle to protect Earth from those pesky space invaders. *(Shipping 2/13/96)*


TIME SLIP
is a new series offering the chance to see how the original Marvel Universe characters would look if first designed by today's hot creators.
IT'S 1962 AGAIN... AND STAN LEE HAS JUST HAD A NEW IDEA!!
THIS TIME: A COMIC BOOK FEATURING A TEENAGER WITH THE ABILITY TO CLIMB WALLS LIKE A SPIDER...
IT'S GOING TO BE CALLED SPIDER-MAN!
Your name is MIKE ALLRED. You've created the cult-hero MADMAN, a hero soon to be featured in a major motion picture. You've penciled such books as SANDMAN, and THE GEEK. But this is different. This is STAN "THE MAN" who's talking to you. And MARVEL COMICS is about to be born...
NOW MIKE THIS IS HOW IT WORKS. PICTURE A TEENAGER WHO LOST HIS PARENTS A LONG TIME AGO. HIS AILING AUNT MAY AND WELL-MEANING UNCLE BEN HAVE DONE THEIR BEST TO RAISE HIM AS THEIR OWN SON. BUT THEY'RE ONLY HUMAN AND, AS A RESULT, PETER PARKER GROWS UP A LITTLE OLD FASHIONED.
HE'S PICKED ON AT SCHOOL, MADE FUN OF, FORCED TO HIDE HIS TEARS FROM THE JEERS OF HIS WOULD-BE FRIENDS...
YOU KNOW, MIKE, HE'S A WALLFLOWER. BUT WE'RE GOING TO TURN THIS WALLFLOWER INTO A WALL-CRAWLER!
WHEN PETER PARKER ATTENDS A SCIENCE EXHIBIT ON RADIOACTIVE ENERGY, A LONE SPIDER WILL BE DOUSED IN THE LETHAL ENERGY...
...AND WITH ITS LAST REMAINING BREATH, BITES PARKER!
PETER WILL, WITH THE BITE, RECEIVE AMAZING AGILITY, SPECTACULAR SPIDER SENSES, AND THE GRAVITY-DEFYING ABILITY TO CLIMB WALLS JUST AS EASILY AS SOMEONE LIKE YOU OR I CAN WALK!
NOW, MIKE, PETER GIVES BRAINY KIDS A BAD NAME, OKAY? HE'S A GENIUS, SO HE'S GOING TO BE ABLE TO INVENT SOME SORT OF "WEB" APPARATUS WHICH WILL ALLOW HIM TO SWING FROM BUILDING TO BUILDING.
ULTIMATELY, THROUGH A TRAGEDY THAT WILL BE OF HIS OWN MAKING, HE'LL DISCOVER THAT WITH GREAT POWER THERE MUST ALSO COME GREAT RESPONSIBILITY.
...AND SPIDER-MAN WILL BE BORN! I WANT SKETCHES THIS AFTERNOON, MIKE...

...AND A FINISHED PIECE TOMORROW!!!
ALLRED M.D. '95
TIME SLIP
BOLDLY BROUGHT TO YOU BY
"SNAZZY" MIKE ALLRED AND "JAZZY" JIM KRUEGER
STAN "THE MAN" LEE
DENNIS CALERO AND MEL SANCHEZ

DOOMED FOR ALL TIME

A person who will travel 100+ years into the past because he can't accept his country's fate is a person who will not take "no" for an answer. Doom has always been like this. Remember when the Fantastic Four had to brainwash him into thinking he beat them, just to get him to go away? Tom Peyer remembers FANTASTIC FOUR ANNUAL #2, and as the new writer on DOOM 2099 beginning with issue #40, he understands that this never-say-die attitude and uncontrollable ego are what fans have always adored about the evil Doctor. Now, with the four-part story line beginning in February, Tom will continue the legacy of Doom, making sure the rest of the world understands the events of "One Nation Under Doom," the destruction of his beloved Latveria, and his untimely ousting from power at the hands of Herod will keep him from what he feels is his rightful position: ruler of the world. Following on the heels of the very popular DOOM 2099 writer Warren Ellis, Tom, who is currently writing X-NATION 2099, has stepped in to take Doom on his most important and unusual story line yet. That's quite a task, considering that, for the past year, Doom has been President of the United States and has single-handedly turned the world of 2099 on its ear. The story line he is about to embark on will do that again, and more. Doom, having set himself up in Myridia, after having recharged during his stint in Halo City—helping the X-Men defeat Graverobber and making sure his final Presidential decree of a safe haven for mutantkind was complete—will trace his steps back, and begin his rise back to power by returning to the past. Beginning with issue #40, and continuing for three issues, Doom will travel back to 1996 to change history again. Distraught by what Herod has done to Latveria, and determined that Latveria will be a major world power again by 2099, his plans include him giving his country an important piece of future technology. It could possibly be a weapon, but for now, readers will have to wait and see just what exactly Doom has planned for both the current Marvel Universe and the future one. Neither will remain unscathed, as even Doom can't change time to suit his desires, though he, of course, believes he can. Because Doom won't be able to travel back in time with his technological ace-in-the-hole, he has to collect the pieces in 1996 and build it there from scratch. "Along the way he'll be bumping into various present-day Marvel heroes and villains. And for the first time, fans of 2099 will get to see familiar 2099 elements in their early stages of development, including the beginnings of the corporation that will eventually become Alchemax," says Peyer. "Doom will arrive in 1996 brimming with power, confidence and a solid plan to undo Latveria's tragic future. Every obstacle he meets will set his plan back terribly and increase his determination. By the climax of the last act, he's been stripped of his armor, his power, and any allies he might have made—even his ability to stand up straight. But he just won't take no for an answer! With his last spark of vicious moxie, he achieves the FINAL VICTORY OF DOOM!" Part one sees Doom arrive in present-day Latveria where "he's overcome with rapturous joy on seeing his homeland in such good shape. He breaks into Castle Doom to collect the first piece of tech that he needs to build the...well, we won't know exactly what he's building yet; we assume it's prob-

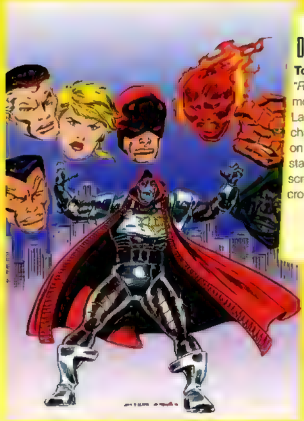
ably some awful weapon, and of course, he fights his way through an array of his old, half-remembered security devices," says Peyer. "At this stage, he's powerful, purposeful and too confident. As a result, Dr. Doom 1996 becomes hip to his presence and chases him through our remaining stories. "[I'm going to] set this up so that Doom must help Doc Doom surreptitiously. He can't tell him anything. He's just got to bury the tech in Dr. Doom's machinery and have faith that his younger self will find it and exploit it." In issues #41 and 42, Doom will slash his way through the present-day Marvel Universe. While he goes around collecting all the technological components, he's going to make a lot of enemies along the way. He's a man on a mission and in keeping with his never-say-die attitude, he's going to really upset a lot of people. He'll bump into Alchemax, which may just be "the Alchemical soap company," laughs Peyer, "maybe Spider-Man will be there." Other present-day heroes that may appear in Doom's travels are Daredevil, Prince Namor, Doctor Strange and The Thing. All of these characters have had links to the younger Doom in some way. "I think it would be wise to use those ties to reinforce the idea that both Dooms are the same guy—and both Marvel eras are the same time-line," says Tom. And for all those who don't believe that the Marvel 2099 books have any connection to the current Marvel Universe, this story line will dispel any remaining doubt. 2099 is the future of Marvel. "The point [of this story line] is to challenge Doom's iron will. [I see] these issues as almost a series of vignettes in which he loots gadget after gadget and increases his army of foes and pursuers. By the end of the second issue, he's looking like the underdog. Half the Marvel Universe is after him, his armor tech is failing (try getting replacement parts 100 years in the past), and his escape route back to 2099 is cut off. It looks pretty hopeless, but he just keeps going." Doom's run-in with The Thing will lead into the Fantastic Four crossover this April with issues of both DOOM 2099 (#42) and FANTASTIC FOUR (#413), and for those of you who thought the SPIDER-MAN 2099 MEETS SPIDER-MAN bookshelf was Marvel history, leave it to Doom to not be outdone. In order to assemble his gadget, Doom is going to need Reed's state-of-the-art—at least state of the art for 1996—Marvel Universe lab. He may even be after the time sled, so he'll have

to bust into the Fantastic Four headquarters in order to gain access as well as to escape his pursuers. For the FF, Doom's assault on their home will lead to many important discoveries. For one, Reed will discover the mysterious and important plot point of Planet (M)arvel, the origin of which, for now, is under wraps. Meanwhile, the FF will almost destroy the weakened Doom, even stripping him of his armor. "By the end of this story Doom will be gone," says Peyer, "kidnapped by Dr. Doom!" Issue #43 will be monumental for Dooms of both times. Dr. Doom, now aware of his future self's identity, interrogates and tortures his weaker future self. He is absolutely relentless in his pursuit of future knowledge. "His attitude is, 'Hey, I'll suffer later, but I gotta know now,'" says Peyer. "[But] Doom stonewalls, and keeps it together by anticipating his younger self's behavior. I know this sounds utterly sick, but it could be really scary and memorable. It's gotta blow Doom's mind to be on the receiving end of his own evil. This experience will surely haunt him for a long time. And just when it seems that all hope is lost, in a dazzling feat of tactical improvisation I've yet to devise, Doom manages to implant the tech and return home, where—" well, you'll see. Once back in the future, the ramifications of Doom's toying with the past will have a ripple effect throughout the 2099 Universe. For one thing, he will not be returning to 2099. He has overshot his mark to the year 2101. Beginning this June is "Fast Forward," the story event which launches the new blanket title for 2099 to 2101. All of the books will be thrown even further into the future and all of the books will have had major changes occur during the missing time period. It will be up to the writers to bring fans up to date, but part of the fun will be finding out all of the events that have taken place regarding the heroes. Some of the heroes will be gone and others will have replaced them. The future of the future is on its way and the past will never be the same.

—Lia Pelosi

Jack into the future

Titles from the 2099 family shipping in February



Doom 2099 no.40

Tom Peyer/John Buscema

"Rage against Time"—Part 1 of 4. Doom travels to the modern day Marvel Universe! Doom's plan to save Latveria leads him to 1996—face first with a ton of Marvel characters—and smack into the FF headquarters! Jump on as new regular writer Tom (X-NATION 2099) Peyer starts the story you've been asking for—which runs screaming into April's DOOM 2099/FANTASTIC FOUR crossover! *(Shipping 2/20/96)*

X-Nation no.2

Tom Peyer/Humberto Ramos/ Jimmy Palmiotti

Continuing the all-new, all-different adventures of the next generation of mutants! Cerebra & the kids work on the runaway center, the search for the Messiah continues, and Herod sends Falconer on a kidnap-ping raid to X-Nation! Like GENERATION X? Then you'll melt into a puddle of drool for this book—which features the awesome art of a WIZARD "Up & Coming Creator," Humberto (IMPULSE) Ramos! *(Shipping 2/13/96)*

Fantastic Four 2099 no.4

Karl Kesel/Matt Ryan

Reed, Sue, Ben & Johnny are attacked from without and within! River Styx teams with Siege to bring the team down as Chimera schemes against the Invisible Woman! Karl *(SUPERBOY)* Kesel delivers the world's greatest future comic! *(Shipping 2/20/96)*

Spider-Man 2099 no.42

Peter David/Andrew Wildman

Spider-Man: defender of Alchemax?! When a worker's revolt leads to terrorist raids, the future's wall-crawler may find himself in the ironic role as Alchemax's last hope! *(Shipping 2/6/96)*

X-Men 2099 no.31

John Francis Moore/Ron Lim/ Harry Candelario

Luna, Skullfire, Krystalin & Meanstreak make a run for the border to Mexico City on a mission to get a read on the mystery mutant known as Book. Meanwhile, the Lawless return—but someone's picking them off like flies! *(Shipping 2/20/96)*

Ghost Rider 2099 no.24

Len Kaminski/Ashley Wood/Jim Daly

Penultimate issue! Ghost Rider slams it into gear and lays rubber into next month's final, double-sized 25th issue. Geez, they buried Ravage alive, vaporized the Punisher, and blew away the Hulk—what do they have cooked up for GR? *(Shipping 2/13/96)*

MARVEL BUCKS THE SYSTEM

ONLY 99¢

"It's darn inexpensive." —Bobbie Chase, Editor in Chief of OVER THE EDGE AND UNDER A BUCK

Four quarters. Twenty nickels. One George Washington. A buck. Whatever way you look at it, a dollar is not enough to buy you much these days. But what if it was enough to buy you an extra fifteen minutes with your favorite do-gooder every month? And suddenly the loose change that favors the dark caverns of sofa cushions all across the country is labeled the newest endangered species.

In August, Marvel began what has come to be known as the dollar book series. These titles, actually priced at ninety-nine cents, include some of the greatest heroes of the Marvel Universe including Spider-Man, the Avengers, the Fantastic Four, the X-Men, the Hulk, Daredevil, and Ghost Rider. Their aim is to introduce new readers to their respective core titles as well as give loyal fans a chance to see more of their favorite characters. Basically, it's "cheap, reader-friendly, easily accessible comic books," explains Tom Brevoort, editor of UNTOLD TALES OF SPIDER-MAN. "These days when the average prices are somewhere in the neighborhood of $2.95, it's nice to get a comic book for less than a dollar." Sounds like Marvel is right on the money with this project.

UNTOLD TALES OF SPIDER-MAN

With the help of writer Kurt Busiek, penciler Pat Olliffe, and inker Al Vey, the Spidey dollar book showcases never-before-seen early Spider-Man adventures. Explains Tom, "Basically we're doing stories that flip in and out of the old Spider-Man continuity. It's all new material that fits in between AMAZING SPIDER-MAN issue #s 5 and 6, 6 and 7, and so forth. There are subplots that will run from issue to issue but you'll be able to pick up virtually any issue and get a complete beginning, middle, and end in the classic Marvel style."

> **"If there's anyone out there saying, 'I wish comics were cheaper,' here's your chance to support something that'll prove you mean it."** —Mark Gruenwald, Editor in Chief FF and AVENGERS UNPLUGGED.

UNTOLD TALES OF SPIDER-MAN returns the reader to a time in the web-slinger's life when things were not as complicated as they are today. "It really does focus on what the Spider-Man strip was about in its earliest days: Peter Parker and his problems, his troubles with his peers in his high school, and as a distrusted crime-fighter...You'll also get to see all the classic characters in their classic molds. One of the great things about this is that we can do a Dr. Octopus story, we can do a Kraven story. These are characters that are dead right now, yet we have free rein with them as long as we don't contradict the stories that were around them. There's just a sense of free/wheeling fun which I think has been missing from the regular book with the real heavy clone story line."

PROFESSOR XAVIER AND THE X-MEN

Following Spider-Man's lead, PROFESSOR XAVIER AND THE X-MEN goes back in time to showcase Marvel's most popular mutants with some new twists. It's "retelling the original series of the X-Men from issue number one," according to the book's editor Kelly Corvese. "We're picking a certain character in each issue and doing it from their point of view. In the first issue it's Jean Grey as she joins the X-Men. Writer Fred Schiller gets inside her head and what it is like to meet these other mutants, being trained by Professor X, and then their first battle with Magneto and how scary it is for her. In the next issue, we took the Vanisher and did it from a villain's point of view."

Kelly has faith that the new approaches to the original X-tales will make them an enjoyable, worthwhile read: "There are a lot of new elements, especially with the two that Fabian [Nicieza] is writing [#s 3 and 4]. Fabian wanted to get into the Blob's head and how he felt like an outcast and really explore that. Also, it's not set in the sixties; the language is updated and so are the characters." Jan Duursema will be responsible for the new art and updated appearance of the pages.

FANTASTIC FOUR UNPLUGGED

Coming to you bimonthly is FANTASTIC FOUR UNPLUGGED, edited by Nel Yomtov: "What we wanted to do with this particular title was, on a rotating basis, feature each of the characters in solo adventures. There are twenty pages of story and three pages of the book are devoted to explaining, through graphs and charts and graphics, the interrelations of the characters so at a glance you can find out who's who and why they're important in the series. Often a book that has a thirty year history immediately scares away potential readers because they feel they'll never catch up on what's been going on before. This is a real fun way of doing it."

With the help of artist Andriana Melo, writer Mike Lackey is set to further explore current storylines and aspects of the team. Issues 3 and 4 will center around the effects of Reed Richards' return to the pages of FF after his supposed death. Because the dollar book stands alone from the monthly title, "It can be a good jumping-on point for a new reader or highlight an aspect of an on-going story line which they don't have time to realize in the regular book."

AVENGERS UNPLUGGED

Rotating on a bimonthly basis with the Fantastic Four dollar book, AVENGERS UNPLUGGED also spotlights one or two team members per issue and loosely intertwines with current Avengers continuity. Says Glenn Herdling, the book's writer, "It's going to be single-issue stories so you don't have to worry about the consequences of some action ten issues down the road. This will allow readers to buy the one issue and get a full-fledged story with the Avengers that they want."

Editor Ralph Macchio believes, "...with all the groups being so heavy and so connected it's almost like a relief. It's aimed at the same audience that would enjoy the Avengers but we can do some stuff that's lighter and more fun. For example, issue #4 is going to have the wedding of the Absorbing Man and Titania...that's fun but still action-packed."

This book also promises to be the best place to get a closer look at some of the newly revamped members of the team as depicted by penciler M.C. Wyman and inker Sandu Florea. Editor in Chief Mark Gruenwald says readers can look forward to "character insights and all the stuff that there isn't room for in the regular books as well as more on-panel time" for many of the Earth's Mightiest.

> **"Pick up the book for 99 cents and have a good time."** —Ralph Macchio, editor of AVENGERS UNPLUGGED and writer for DAREDEVIL/OVER THE EDGE

OVER THE EDGE AND UNDER A BUCK

This final addition to the Marvel dollar book releases will hit the stands next month. OVER THE EDGE AND UNDER A BUCK showcases characters from the Marvel Edge line-up including Daredevil, Dr. Strange, the Hulk, Ghost Rider, and Punisher on a monthly rotating basis. Editor James Felder is not quick to reveal any hints about what themes will be explored in the book but he promises they will be big. "For the first round, it's the return of the villains for each book. The second round we have a continuity thing that'll be tying them together...and feature some special characters but it's kind of a secret at the moment." It's no secret, however, that the dollar book adventures have a unique charm. "To a certain degree, some of the stories work better in the ninety-nine cent book only because we have to strive to make it the classic, archetypal tale." Ralph Macchio, Terry Kavanagh, and Bruce Sakow are set to make writing contributions to the upcoming series. Robert Brown and Mike Witherby will provide the art.

So what are you all waiting for? Scrounge up those extra nickels, return those empty bottles for a refund, skip the vending machine at lunch and go grab that Marvel dollar book instead. For that extra read every month, you bet it's worth a buck.

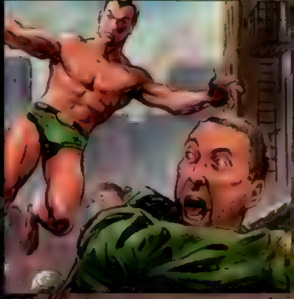
– Rob Piotrowski

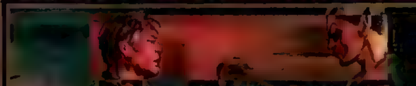
TALES OF THE MARVELS

takes on the Sub-Mariner.

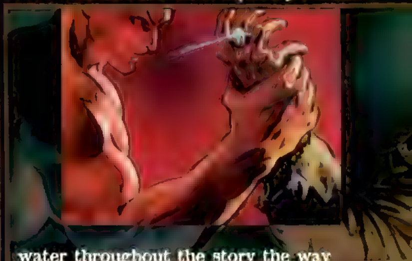
The TALES OF THE MARVELS series focuses on a particular event in the history of the Marvel Universe and explores it from the perspective of an average man on the street. This December, INNER DEMONS will introduce John Mahoney, an alcoholic bum living on the Bowery of New York City. Readers will witness John's struggle to regain

his life with the aid of his best friend and fellow bum, Namor, the Sub-Mariner. The story is written by Mariano Nicieza and fully painted by Bob Wakelin. The events of INNER DEMONS take place after Sub-Mariner's battle with the villain Destiny, which stripped Namor of his memories, and continue through to the moment when Johnny Storm, the Human Torch, upon recognizing the lost Prince of Atlantis plunged him into New York Harbor. This classic scene was originally presented in FANTASTIC FOUR #4. "It's about a man coming to terms with his alcohol problem and what it has caused him to lose in the past," Nicieza explained. "The story opens with Namor seemingly having his act together while his pal John doesn't. By the end, the whole scenario is turned upside down. Namor has the rug pulled out from under him when the rash actions of the Human Torch cause his memory to return." In fact, it is the Torch's rash act that becomes the emotional impetus of the book. The scene's original presentation was less dramatic, because it was not revealed until later that Destiny not only gave the Sub-Mariner amnesia, but also instilled in him an intense fear of water. As INNER DEMONS progresses, Namor's hydrophobia becomes more and more prevalent in shaping his life as well as those around him. So when the Human





Torch plunges a helpless Namor into the East River, the effect for the reader will be as profound as Namor's. The reader immediately gets a taste of the Sub-Mariner's quandary when the story opens. A dehydrated and dying Sub-Mariner finally drinks the water given to him by his fellow bums, although the mere sight of H_2O scares him to death. The water saves Namor and, in an ironic twist, he subsequently drinks



water throughout the story the way John Mahoney drinks alcohol. When the homeless group has to set up a new camp, the protestations of Namor force his friends to settle for a less desirable locale than the optimal one near the waterfront. Fans of the Marvel Universe will enjoy the many cameos and guest appearances of other characters they only know from later stories. SPIDER-MAN's Norman Osborn, the original Green Goblin, appears long before his super-villainous origins, as an equally evil developer who wants the homeless removed from the Bowery so that he can demolish the area and build warehouses for him-

sleeping with... ...the fishes

self. He sends The Enforcers, also of Spider-Man fame, to forcibly remove them. This leads to a confrontation between The Enforcers' Ox and Namor in the basement of a building. During the battle, Namor rips up a water tank to hurl at Ox, which leads to his own defeat when the tank ruptures and the water that cascades out freezes him with fear. In another scene, a begging Namor is given some spare change by playboy Tony Stark who is leaving a high society function with his glamorous escort. Nicieza revealed that the scene was originally supposed to have Dr Stephen Strange throwing change at Namor in disgust until he discovered that Strange's own life was being ripped asunder by this time. Namor's streetmates will only be familiar to the most continuity conscious of fans as Mariano has taken bums from The Sub Mariner's various origins over the years and made them supporting characters, "down on their luck" types such as Mary Sunshine who debuted in an old MARVEL TWO-IN-ONE. Accompanying Nicieza's exciting trip down early Marvel history are the incredible paintings of artist Bob Wakelin. Editor Marcus McLaurin hired Wakelin a few years ago when he was editing Clive Barker's HELLRAISER. Even though that particular story never saw print, McLaurin has kept Wakelin in his thoughts, awaiting the arrival of a project that would best use the English artist's talents. "He has just the right combination of realism and grit," McLaurin explained, "as well as the ability to do objects that are larger than life." INNER DEMONS will be Wakelin's first work published in the United States. Nicieza was amazed by Wakelin's portrayal of his story. "Bob has done a fantastic job," he said. "His eye and his brush have brought to fruition the vision trapped in my head." Most impressive to Nicieza was Wakelin's brilliant play with reflections. The cover alone is a striking image of a submerged Namor looking up at a fiery Human Torch hovering above the surface. This type of reflective image is seen throughout the story whether it be off a puddle, a pool of blood, or a glass of water. Although confronted with several possible story ideas from Nicieza, McLaurin chose this one because of the "instant recognition of a key juncture in Marvel Universe history. There were bits of Namor's past that we could build on which were touched upon–in various re-tellings of his origin–that would be familiar enough with the readers without being old hat. "[And] it had a really cool story," he continued, "which is the heart of every TALES OF THE MARVELS, a powerful, human story contrasted to the larger than life aspects of the superhuman universe surrounding it." Initially, Nicieza's idea concentrated on Namor, but McLaurin realized that the strength of the story lay in John Mahoney, the bum that befriends Namor. McLaurin pushed Nicieza to explore John to the extent that John became the focal point. "I must give credit where credit is due," Nicieza offered. "Marcus pushed me above and beyond what I have been pushed to do before. I think he brought out some great writing." And why change Nicieza's original direction for the story? McLaurin reasoned that "when all is said and done, we cannot change Namor. The Sub-Mariner is a well-established character with years of history. But we can show an evolution with John. If John is not a character whom the reader loves, or hates, or has any feelings about, it isn't going to work. "There are bends and twists in this story that are going to go way beyond what is expected," he furthered. "People are going to pick up this book believing it to be a story focusing on Namor. What it is going to give them is tons of surprises involving Namor but not necessarily about Namor.

STEPHEN VRATTOS

Playing the hero

Titles from the Heroes family shipping in February

Captain America no.450A

Mark Waid/Ron Garney/Denis Rodier

"Man Without a Country"—Part 1 of 4. HAPPY ANNIVERSARY CAPTAIN AMERICA—NOW GET OUT OF THE U.S.A.! When the super soldier is branded a traitor, he is forced into making the most agonizing decision of his 50-year career! Even if you missed "Operation Rebirth," here's another chance to hop on board the comic that's taking the industry by storm! Even the skeptics agree, CAPTAIN AMERICA is a great book: "Now for the first time in recent memory I can rave about a regular, monthly Marvel title. Waid has restored my reverence for the character" (OVERSTREET'S FAN #5) *(Shipping 2/6/96)*

Captain America no.450B

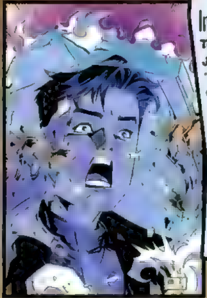
Mark Waid/Ron Garney/Denis Rodier

A variant cover by Ron Garney and Denis Rodier! *(Shipping 2/6/96)*

War Machine no.25

Dan Abnett/Fred Haynes/Johnny Greene

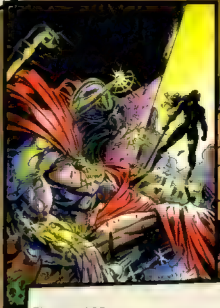
CONCLUDING ISSUE! Surprise revelations jump-start a new beginning for War Machine! Will Jim Rhodes turn his back on Earth to seek his destiny in the stars? It's a shock-filled issue that IRON MAN fans won't want to miss *(Shipping 2/13/96)*



Iron Man no.327

Terry Kavanagh/ Jimmy Cheung/Mark McKenna

"Iron Man: Day One!" We really can't tell you too much about this special issue because of the events of issue #325, but here goes a new love, a new life, and a new world for Shell Head! The Avengers, Hawkeye & Masque guest star in this tailor-made "jump-on" issue *(Shipping 2/13/96)*



Thor no.497

William Messner-Loebs/Mike Deodato

Thor & the Enchantress are gods no more! A fearful fate targets Asgard! Plus: more on the mystery man called Price. William Messner-Loebs and Mike Deodato, the team that added heat to WONDER WOMAN, are here recharging the thunder god! OVERSTREET'S FAN checked out THOR's new direction and said, "...sit down, strap in, and get ready for one helluva ride!" *(Shipping 2/13/96)*

Captain Marvel no.5

Fabian Nicieza/Darick Gross

How will Captain Marvel exact vengeance against the Godstalker, the intergalactic "parole officer" who happens to be a freakin' Celestial? The cosmic kid's solution to this conundrum will shock saints and sinners alike. COMIC SHOP NEWS knows what's cool, that's why they put CAPTAIN MARVEL on their "Hot Picks" list! *(Shipping 2/6/96)*

Fantastic Four no.411

Tom DeFalco/Paul Ryan/Danny Bulanadi

Another world's greatest roller-coaster ride: Black Bolt goes berserk, the Inhumans are running scared, and the Invisible Woman undergoes a major status quo change! *(Shipping 2/20)*

Fantastic Force no.18

Tom Brevoort & Mike Kanterovich/ Dante Bastianoni/Ralph Cabrera

LAST ISSUE! Franklin Richard's power is unleashed against the all new Diablo & his benefactor, the Mephistoid! Will the return of Reed Richards dissolve the Fantastic Force? Fans of the FANTASTIC FOUR should tune in to learn the fate of the Human Torch! *(Shipping 2/13/96)*

Avengers Unplugged no.4

Glenn Herdling/John Statema

When Mr. Fantastic & the Invisible Woman got married, all they wanted was a peaceful wedding. Did they get it? Nooooo. Absorbing Man & Titan a want the same thing. Will they get it? What do you think? It's cake, garters & super powered gate-crashers—for only 99 cents! *(Shipping 2/6/96)*

Marvel Versus DC no.3

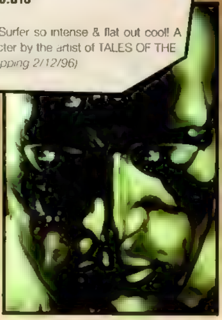
Ron Marz/Claudio Castellini & Dan Jurgens/ Paul Neary & Josef Rubinstein

THE MAIN EVENT IN THE BRAWL FOR IT ALL! Hulk vs Superman! Batman vs Captain America! Storm vs. Wonder Woman! Superboy vs Spider-Man! Wolverine vs Lobo! The outcome of these battles determines the fate of the top two universes in all of comicdom! And best of all: YOU PICK THE WINNERS! Plus an industry first: the birth of a super hero—jointly owned and created by both Marvel and DC who will impact the continuity of both universes! It's 48 historic pages of the knuckle scrapin' calamity! *(Shipping 2/20/96)*

Silver Surfer Press Poster no.218

Painted by Bob Wakelin

You've never seen a shot of the Surfer so intense & flat out cool! A chilling painting of a classic character by the artist of TALES OF THE MARVELS: INNER DEMONS *(Shipping 2/12/96)*



Force Works no.22

Dan Abnett & Andy Lanning/Heitor Oliveira/Rey Garcia

FINAL ISSUE! In the aftermath of "The Crossing," Force Works attempts to rebuild, but is the damage—to the HQ, to the team, to their lives—too much to repair? This concluding issue holds all the answers that will reverberate in upcoming issues of THE AVENGERS *(Shipping 2/6/96)*

THE *BATMAN* TV SHOW CHANGED MARK WAID'S LIFE. THE ALABAMA BORN WAID SAYS, "I TOOK IT COMPLETELY SERIOUSLY. I WAS FOUR, AND I THOUGHT IT WAS DRAMA. SO MY DAD STARTED BRINGING COMICS HOME, NEVER REALIZING THE IMPACT IT WOULD HAVE." *ACTION COMICS* #572 WAS THE SCENE OF THE WRITER WAID'S DEBUT. "IT WAS AN EIGHT-PAGE SUPERMAN STORY CALLED 'PUZZLE OF THE PURLOINED FORTRESS.' "

HE HAS SUBSEQUENTLY SCRIBBLED FOR DEADPOOL, *FLASH, IMPULSE, JUSTICE LEAGUE QUARTERLY, LEGION OF SUPER-HEROES*, X-MEN OMEGA, X-MEN ALPHA, *VERONICA IN ROME* AND MORE.

WAID LISTS OTHER WRITERS AS HIS STRONGEST INFLUENCES. AMONG THEM: DAVID E. KELLEY, "THE GUY WHO WRITES *CHICAGO HOPE* AND *PICKET FENCES*. HE DOES BRILLIANT CHARACTER STUFF;" WILLIAM GOLDMAN, "HE WROTE *BUTCH CASSIDY AND THE SUNDANCE KID*. HE CAN PLOT A STORY LIKE NOBODY'S BUSINESS;" AND ELLIOT S. MAGGIN, "BECAUSE HIS WORK TAUGHT ME TO LOOK INSIDE THE CHARACTERS AND SEE THE WORLD THROUGH THEIR EYES."

CURRENTLY WRITING CAPTAIN AMERICA, *FLASH, IMPULSE* AND X-MEN, THIS IS WHAT HE HAS TO SAY FOR HIMSELF.

FIRST COMIC READ?

Batman #180, "Death Knocks Three Times." It was like that Batman show on TV, only sillier! The first Marvel comic I read was UNCANNY X-MEN #17, and I hated it. It was a continued story! For twelve cents, I could read *Jimmy Olsen* and get three complete stories! What was this continued story garbage? It took me four years to buy another Marvel comic, AMAZING SPIDER-MAN #100, and then I got sucked in.

FAVORITE COMIC OF ALL TIME?

Detective Comics #500, a clever Batman story by Alan Brennert that was the perfect balance between being plot-driven and character-driven. My favorite Marvel comic would be CAPTAIN AMERICA #183. It was the story where Captain America, after a long period as Nomad, took up the mantle of Captain America once more. He gave a soul-stirring speech about it. It really touched me.

FAVORITE WORK OF YOUR OWN?

Flash #0, because it was me using Flash to live out a fantasy of my own, which was desperately wanting to go back in time and tell ten-year-old Mark Waid that someday, regardless of all the bad things that might happen to him in his life, all of his dreams would come true. My favorite Marvel work thus far is the DEADPOOL mini-series. I think that it hung together pretty well, and it was fun writing a psychopath.

[illegible]OMICS YOU CURRENTLY [illegible]?

Hate, THOR, *Stray Bullets, Astro City, Uncle Scrooge*, UNTOLD TALES OF SPIDER-MAN and anything with Radioactive Man in it.

[illegible] CHARACTER?

Pre-Crisis Superboy, the one who was the teen-age Superman. It was always so full of innocence and fun. I loved the stuff! My favorite Marvel character is Captain America. He is the perfect action hero. He defines everything that is right about the human spirit. He never gives up, he will always find a way.

[illegible]ACTER?

Batroc The Leaper...or, as he says it, Batroc Ze Leepair...kick-boxing froggy and all-time lamest Captain America villain. Most of all, I don't get the name. He ALWAYS refers to himself as "Batroc the Leaper." Should I constantly refer to myself as "Mark Waid the Writer"? What's infuriating is that there is potential to the character if he were re-designed and played straight; CAPTAIN AMERICA editor Ralph Macchio has challenged me to unearth that potential.

MOST EMBARRASSING MOMENT?

Trying to liven up my first meeting with Stan Lee by saying, "Hey! You're the guy who created Batroc The Leaper!" He didn't laugh. In retrospect, really, who would?

[illegible]

The X-Men, of course. And the Fantastic Four, because it's just a hoot. Nothing more lively than a good round of "Mystery Fantastic Four Theater 3000." Nothing else; I sleep in on Saturdays!

[illegible] YOU WOULD MOST LIKE TO WORK WITH?

Dave Gibbons, who drew *Watchmen*. Curt Swan, Terry Dodson, Paul Smith.

[illegible] TO YOUR WORK?

If it has no jokes in it, it's not a Mark Waid story. I would like to think that my stories have a heart and try to be about something. If I can make you laugh and give you a lump in your throat, then I've done my job.

— Ruth Morrison, secret girlfriend of Archie Andrews

When Christmas is over, you've already broken that cool Millennium Falcon model you got (who knew it would make the jump to hyperspace so quickly?), and it's too cold to run around outside in those new Wonder Woman Underoos that are a titillating six sizes too small, then what's to live for? Why, the February relaunch of the brand-new ADVENTURES OF SPIDER-MAN comic (formerly SPIDER-MAN ADVENTURES), of course! The book will be based on the popular Saturday morning show of the same name, but rather than adapting already aired episodes, as the previous ADVENTURES did, it will feature all-new stories based on the show's continuity and starring its characters. That's right, Peter Parker is young, single, and meeting villains like the Lizard and the Hobgoblin for the very first time! "This is an excellent way for fans who weren't around when Spider-Man was just beginning (what, thirty years ago? Was Clinton even in diapers yet?) to see the origins of the now-famous web-slinger. And long-time fans craving a fix of traditional Spidey will be more than satisfied," expounds editor Sarra Mossoff. According to Mossoff, the book will mirror the look and feel of the television show. The creative team consists of writer Nel Yomtov, veteran Spidey penciler Alex Saviuk, and inker Robert Stull, whose brush inking style helps give the book an animated feel. Stull is excited. "It's cool that we're going to be doing our own stories [illegible] gleefully [illegible] a slight [illegible] anim[illegible] for [illegible] book [illegible] uk, [illegible] more [illegible] der [illegible] than [illegible] pen- [illegible] d [illegible] prosp [illegible] stories [illegible] Saviuk explains that one of the hardest things about following the televised episodes to the letter was translating active motion to static comic book pages. "If someone is, say, just walking along in an animated piece, that action, though not incredibly dynamic, is interesting enough to carry the scene. In comic books, it doesn't work that way. Actions need to be big, bold, exaggerated, to work." Though the show airs on a weekend at a time when most adults are just entering the REM phase of sleep, its ratings [illegible] for a Saturday morning cartoon. Writer Nel Yomtov promises new heights [illegible] followers of the show as well as [illegible]ted Spidey-fans and newcomers. "If you're a fan of the show, you won't want to miss these issues," he says. "They dig deeper and play a little harder!"

X-MEN ULTRAVERSE THE BIG EVENT!

The flames have been smoldering and keeping a warm fire. But, in December, the fire rages into an inferno and both the X-Universe and the Ultraverse get burned by the heat!

Can the action get any more exciting? Can the surprise be any more inviting? Yes it can! And it does! Mutants and ultras unite in the ultimate year-end event that has both universes (and comic fans) biting their nails.

The Phoenix rises once again—and with the resurrection comes a threat so powerful it will take X-Men and ultraheroes alike to keep it from devouring the Ultraverse. But, the price of survival from the deadly force is high!

In *The Phoenix Resurrection: Genesis*, Phoenix is pulled into the Ultraverse by the machinations of the Mother Ship. It doesn't want to leave the Ultraverse because it senses that this new universe possesses power that it can use—the ultras!

And, something's come over Prime! He's not himself! Mr. Attitude goes on a rampage and gets into a big ol' brawl with the recently arrived X-Men. UltraForce gets in on the action.

Witness the clash of the clans as the X-Men (Storm, Bishop, Wolverine, Jubilee, Beast, Banshee and Rogue) duke it out with UltraForce (Prime, Hardcase, Prototype and Ghoul)! Plus, The All New Exiles are dragged into the picture when Phoenix starts paying too much attention to Amber Hunt.

In *The Phoenix Resurrection: Revelations* the mighty Phoenix looks like it will get what it wants—and it starts moving the earth closer to the sun.

In order to save the earth, a duel of the most unlikely kind emerges. Which Marvel and Malibu characters unite to fight Phoenix? How did the Exiles end up in the middle of the mess? And, why are Mantra and The Night Man putting their lives on the line to take on Phoenix? The questions pour in as the story thickens and Phoenix rages out of control.

But, who's the new girl everybody is talking about!?!

Her name is Foxfire and she was first sighted in *Genesis*. No one seems to know where she came from. Rumor has it she may be from the future, she may be an alien, and she may be the only hope for saving the future!

Plus, the most exciting news is that Foxfire may be related to a well-known superhero! But, the editor of the books won't tell us who! (I guess we should know better.) We're as anxious as you are to find out!

Hot talent Ian Edginton writes the spectacular special event books: *The Phoenix Resurrection: Genesis* and *The Phoenix Resurrection: Revelations*. Stimulating art for *Genesis* is courtesy of Darick Robertson, Mark Pacella, Tom Wegrzyn, Art Thibert, Greg Luzniak, Bob Wiacek and Rob Haynes. Talented artists on *Revelations* include Kevin West, Tom Wegrzyn, Philip Moy and Randy Green.

The cross-company saga began in "The Phoenix Resurrection," and ran in all seven Ultraverse titles in November. This month it moves into two 48-page books: *The Phoenix Resurrection: Genesis* and *The Phoenix Resurrection: Revelations*. And, next month the story concludes with *Phoenix Resurrection: The Aftermath*. In February, the adventures continue with the major launch of 1996... *Foxfire*.

This fiery event will burn both universes beyond belief!

THE PHOENIX RESURRECTION™

DECEMBER

The Phoenix Resurrection: Genesis

The Phoenix Resurrection: Revelations

JANUARY

Phoenix Resurrection: The Aftermath

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RUNE VS. VENOM

DEMONIC DUEL

The Prince of Void takes on the Lethal Protector in the ultimate crossover of the year! *Rune/Silver Surfer. UltraForce/Avengers*. They re nothin compared to *Rune Vs. Venom* #1!

The lean, mean, millennia-old energy vampire is in for some grave changes as a result of Venom s visit. You won t believe what will happen to the dark god that is, unless you check out *Rune Vs. Venom* #1 and see it for yourself!

Writer Chris Ulm returns to the character he co-created with artist Barry Windsor-Smith in this one-shot special. Ulm is promising that the audience will not be disappointed. Fans are going to want to see what happens when the alien symbiote attached to Eddie Brock transfers to someone else, he said. It s not going to be pretty, but it will make for compelling reading.

Rune found himself trapped in the Marvel Universe as a result of the *Curse Of Rune* mini-series. So far, he s had it out with Gemini Rune and was sent to the Negative Zone where he battled Annihilus. But these encounters were child s play in comparison to the battle he ll wage with Venom. The thrashing struggle will alter Rune significantly by story s end and he ll never be the same.

Venom is one of the newest Marvel Universe stars. Venom is Eddie Brock wedded to an alien symbiote and sworn enemy of Spider-Man.

Over 4,000 years old, Rune is the oldest character in the Ultraverse and the meanest. An energy vampire, he craves the life-giving power of ultras for his strength and survival.

Ulm is joined by artists Greg Luzniak, Mark Pacella and Gabriel Gecko on the 48-page *Rune Vs. Venom* #1. Roland Mann is editing the project and Marvel s Tom Brevoort is consulting.

What a year for Rune! He s been through a lot: Silver Surfer, Gemini Rune, Annihilus and now Venom. That has to take a heavy toll on even one of the Ultraverse s strongest characters.

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THE ALL NEW® EXILES

HEART VS. HEAD

A battle of the worst kind! Torn between what he feels he should do and what he is obligated to do, the shadowy Hellblade must decide whether or not to take down the most notorious terrorists on Earth-the Exiles. Expect the unexpected in this month s *The All New Exiles.*

Hellblade realizes that the Exiles may not be the deadly mutant villains he thought they were. But will he decide before or after he kills Juggernaut and Amber Hunt?

And, poor Amber Hunt boy is she having a bad day!

She s trapped in the razor-sharp claws of Hellblade who has been holding her hostage. Before the day is through, she ll be forced to battle the deadening powers of Shuriken. A wild cat fight ensues. Shuriken uses a paralyzing shuriken to stop Amber Hunt from really letting loose.

But wait! Here comes Juggernaut to Amber Hunt s rescue!

But wait! Here comes Qune to Shuriken s rescue! Huh?

Who s Qune?

A former lover of Shuriken and the father of her child (who, by the way, is being held hostage by Aladdin) the villainous Qune joins the battle waged by Hellblade. And, it may be that Amber Hunt and Juggernaut finally meet their doom!

Hot Marvel talent Terry Kavanagh writes the adventures for the Exiles with M.C. Wyman as the artist.

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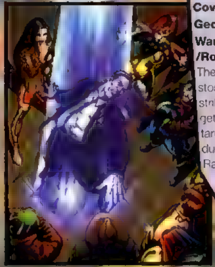
JUGGERNAUT TM & © 1996 Marvel Entertainment Group, Inc. All Rights Reserved.

Mantra no.5

Cover by Dave Roberts & Jim Amash
Jerald DeVictoria/Dave Roberts & Jim Amash

N.M.E. strikes, and Mantra must stop it before it kills everyone in sight. What Mantra doesn't know is that it's been programmed to kill HER! The secret of the new Wrath is also revealed—and it isn't pretty. Of course Mantra is pretty! (Shipping 2/20/96)



Ultraforce no.5

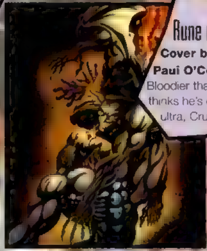
Cover by Darick Robertson & George Pérez
Warren Ellis & Ian Edginton/Robertson & Jerome K. Moore

The first installment of an exciting new story arc! There's an ultra assassin who strikes quickly and stealthily. His last target was a powerful senator—his next target could be UltraForce! Also introducing the gruesome threat of the Rawborgs! *(Shipping 2/27/96)*

The All New Exiles no.5

Cover by Gabriel Gecko
Terry Kavanagh/Ken Lashley & Steve Moncuse

A turning point in the story of the Exiles! As the Exiles team grows closer and romance blooms, one of the relationships is ripped asunder by the revenge of the Tradesmen! Also features a story that delves into the background of Amber! *(Shipping 2/20/96)*



Rune no.5

Cover by Kyle Hotz and Jason Moore
Paul O'Connor/Tony Akins & Jason Moore

Bloodier than ever has the plague taken its toll. And just as Rune thinks he's defeated it... up pops his latest challenger, the new ultra, Crusader! *(Shipping 2/27/96)*

Prime no.5

Cover by Kevin West & Philip Moy
Gerard Jones & Len Strazewski/John Royle & TBA

Prime must find and reunite with the Freex to try and stop the prophecy of Atalon's Fire People (UltraForce's first threat) from becoming a catastrophic reality! Plus, TurboCharge finally reveals his secret to Prime! *(Shipping 2/6/96)*

Handbook to the Malibu Ultrverse no.2 (of 2)

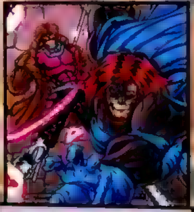
Cover by Jeff Matsuda
Various writers and artists

This 48 page special features in-depth information and secrets of Malibu Ultraverse heroes and villains, as well as updates on the Marvel guests in our universe! Featuring artwork by George Perez, Jerome Moore, John Statema, Bryan Hitch, and many more! Bios include Black Knight, Sersi, Reaper, Nemesis, The Infinity Gems, Prime, the new Night Man, Rune, UltraForce and others. *(Shipping 2/27/96)*

Foxfire no.1

Cover by Kevin West & Philip Moy
Ian Edginton/Kevin West & TBA

How are her powers linked to the Phoenix that threatened the universe last December? Introducing the Ultraverse's major release of '96, FOXFIRE! Foxfire, her powers triggered by the Phoenix Resurrection, is now on her own! What kind of connection does Foxfire have with a major Ultraverse character? What secret from her past will come to haunt her tomorrow? And what is the horrific threat known only as "The Progeny?" These answers and more can be found in this exciting new series debuting this month! *(Shipping 2/13/96)*



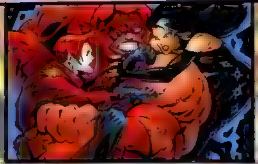
Foxfire no.1 Variant Cover Edition

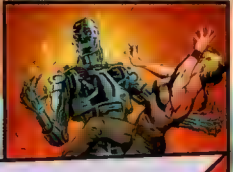
Variant cover painted by Glenn Fabry!!!
(Ships 2/13)

Siren Special no.1

Cover by Randy Green & Jasen Rodriguez
K. H. Kanalz/TBA

Juggernaut tries to stop Siren and Shunken from ripping each other to shreds. Siren's mysterious origin is revealed—and it's not what you think! This special includes extra hot pin-up style story pages. *(Shipping 2/13/96)*





The Night Man/Gambit no.1

Cover by Dietrich Smith & Jason Moore
David Quinn/Dietrich Smith & TBA

Gambit finds more than he gambled for while investigating the death of his Guild brothers...he finds The Night Man! Rhiannon reaches across the dimensions to make both Night Men her slaves. The redefining of The Night Man begins with this series. *(Shipping 2/13/96)*

Terminator™ 2: Present War Cybernetic Dawn no.4

Cover by Rob Prior
Dan Abnett/Rod Whigham & Jack Snider

Sarah Connor and Tarissa Dyson, the widow of the man who would've created Skynet, get to the heart of the secret government installation...and discover the true horror of the conspiracy underway. And something inhuman is right there with them! Meanwhile, John Connor, the future's brightest hope, is lost, alone and face-to-face with a terminator programmed to destroy him once and for all! *(Shipping 2/6/96) (™ ® & © 1996 Carolco)*

Terminator™ 2 Future War Nuclear Twilight no.4

Cover painting by Rob Prior
Mark Paniccia/Gary Erskine

John Connor and crew have infiltrated Skynet's complex and are ready to pull the plug, but the dying machine has one last proverbial breath left, and it's enough to threaten everything the Human Resistance has worked towards. The ultimate computer may yet exterminate the human race. *(Shipping 2/20/96) (™ ® & © 1996 Carolco)*

Break on thru to the other side

Titles from Malibu Comics shipping in February

PENCILS & INKS!

MIKE DEODATO, JR.

*Last month, using **THOR** as a template and with a little help from writer Warren Ellis, we detailed both the plotting and scripting processes. This month, we'll cover the penciling and inking stages, and get the real lowdown from Mike Deodato Jr., who does both on **THOR** .*

After the plot has been approved by the editor (in this case, the dashing Ralph Macchio), a copy is sent to the penciler along with any reference on previously established characters that s/he may need. An artist working on a monthly book generally has about four weeks in which to finish 22 pages.

Depending on who's writing the plot, the artist is given varying amounts of freedom regarding the design of each page. Some writers go so far as to specify panel size and camera angles. Others briefly detail the action to be contained in each page and leave the rest to the artist's imagination. Warren gives Mike a full script, and is fairly thorough in describing the page layouts. Mike admits that he would rather work with a more loosely organized plot, preferring to design the pages himself, but he emphatically stresses that he enjoys working with the grouchy Brit.

There are three levels of pencils—"layouts," "breakdowns," and "finished pencils." Layouts are the loosest of the three and serve mostly to indicate the setup of the page and character placement within the panels. Inkers almost never work with layouts—they are often just the first step in the penciling process.

Breakdowns are more substantial than layouts. Figures are almost fully fleshed out and backgrounds are at least indicated. Large areas that are to be blocked in by the inker are indicated with "x"s. Breakdowns are most often submitted as final work by pencilers who are too busy to turn out finished pencils on every project. From there, a good inker can literally fill in the blanks.

Finished pencils feature full backgrounds and fully fleshed out characters (musculature, facial expressions, etc.). Areas of shadow are completely darkened in. Finished pencils provide a complete framework for the inker to work over.

To produce any of the above, an artist must have an excellent knowledge of anatomy, particularly those working on super hero-type comics. The characters' physiques need to be exaggerated muscularly, but they still need to look human. To this end, Deodato uses a variety of reference materials. "I use everything from cartoons to manga, and, of course, photo reference," he says. "Photos are very important if you want your work to be anchored in reality." Wow—wonder whose picture he's using for the Enchantress!

Though he loves penciling, Mike admits that if he were held at gunpoint and forced to choose between penciling and inking, he'd choose the latter. "I have more control over what the final piece will look like," he explains.

After the pencils have been approved by the editor, they are shipped off to the inker, who is also given around four weeks to finish the pages (this is where Mike lucks out—since the pages never leave his hands, he doesn't have to hang around the house all day waiting for the FedEx guy). Unfortunately for the inker, s/he is often expected to pick up the slack for a late writer or penciler, and may be asked to crank out the required work in three weeks or less. Inking styles vary about as widely as lipstick color does at the Revlon company picnic. Some inkers, like Mike, prefer a fine, smooth look. Some go for a scratchy, crosshatched finish, while others like a bold, jagged look. The rapidograph, which is a type of pen, is the popular tool of choice these days, but there are inkers who refuse to use anything but brushes.

Just like there are three categories of pencils, there are two categories of inks. First, and most commonly, there are the aptly named "inks." This term refers to inks laid down over full pencils. All the inker is really required to do is follow the lines made by the penciler. The second category, "finishes," involves more imaginative and detailed work on the inker's part. The term implies that the inker is working over breakdowns, and s/he is paid accordingly at a higher rate for this work.

If it sounds like inking is easy, just tracing lines and filling in blank spaces, don't worry—it's not. Another task that regularly falls to the inker is that of making corrections. Say, that a penciler doesn't use differing line weights to distinguish between backgrounds and foregrounds. It's the editor's job to catch those things and the inker's job to fix them. They're the plastic surgeons of the comic world, only their tax brackets are a lot lower.

So now that we know what each job entails, what's it like doing both jobs? Mike Deodato sums up his situation in one sentence. "Tell you what:I'm working so much that the only thing I allow myself to watch on TV these days are Mike Tyson's fights, they never take more than a minute!"

—Polly Watson

AN X-FORCE TO RECKON WITH

ADAM POLLINA REVEALS THE SECRET TO HIS SUCCESS

BY ROBERT PIOTROWSKI

The most important thing about comic books is the art. Well, maybe not exactly. As a writer, I'll take every chance I get to defend my craft, but even I must admit that the initial attraction to the comic medium is visual identification with the protagonists. Perhaps every fan's first intention is to draw their favorite characters, portraying their heroics through personal points of view. Public school classrooms are filled with mini Kubert, Madureira, and McFarlane hopefuls. Few actually attempt a career in the industry. Even fewer succeed. By these standards, 25 year-old X-FORCE penciler Adam Pollina is living a dream. Recently, I spent a couple of hours hanging out with the newest artistic addition to the X-Family who, at first glance, could pass for a battery-charged Warpath, a character he himself helped redesign.

As Adam's attention wavered between my questions and the music videos blasting from the TV a few feet away, I managed to gather some interesting insights. Perhaps the most comforting of these was the fact that this is not only the artist who brings these characters to life on the page, he also fits right into their ranks.

Robert: Tell us about young Adam Pollina and comic books.

ADAM: THE FIRST TIME I PICKED UP A COMIC BOOK, I DIDN'T EVEN KNOW HOW TO READ PROPERLY. I GUESS GROWING UP I LIKED COMICS THAT DIDN'T DEAL WITH SUPER HEROES. I LIKED KARATE, VIKINGS, AND SOLDIERS AND THAT KIND OF THING. I REALLY LIKED CONAN, MASTER OF KUNG FU AND SGT. ROCK.

EVENTUALLY I STARTED COLLECTING BITS AND PIECES OF SPIDER-MAN AND THE X-MEN. ISSUE #134 WITH THE HELLFIRE CLUB WAS MY FIRST ISSUE. I REMEMBER ONE IMAGE OF WOLVERINE POPPING HIS CLAWS INTO A MEMBER OF THE HELLFIRE CLUB AND I THOUGHT THAT WAS KINDA SCARY. BUT ON THE SAME TEAM WAS COLOSSUS, THIS SHINING KNIGHT, THIS HUGE ARMORED GUY WHO WAS PERFECTLY SMOOTH AND REFLECTIVE. IT WAS SUCH A CONTRAST.

Was Peter Rasputin (Colossus) your favorite character then?

I LIKED THEM BOTH, BUT I THINK I RELATED TO COLOSSUS BETTER THAN WOLVERINE. I CONTINUED TO COLLECT THE X-MEN BECAUSE OF HIM. I LOVED THE PERSONALITY OF HIM: SIMPLE, PURE, NOBLE. AND THE VISUAL HAD SO MUCH POTENTIAL. I'VE ALWAYS LOVED THE IDEA OF ONE MAN VERSUS MANY. THE REASON I GOT X-MEN #137 WAS BECAUSE I SAW COLOSSUS DONE BY JOHN BYRNE IN FANTASTIC FOUR WHERE THE GLADIATOR SAYS, 'I'VE DEFEATED YOU BEFORE, COLOSSUS.' AND PETER GOES, 'THAT WAS THEN, THIS IS NOW.' AND THERE WAS A LITTLE ASTERISK, SEE X-MEN #137. I REMEMBER GOING TO THE COMIC STORE AND SEEING IT FOR EIGHT DOLARS, WHICH AT THE TIME WAS A WORLD OF MONEY. SO I SAVED UP AND FINALLY I WAS LIKE, 'YEAH, COLOSSUS VERSUS THE GLADIATOR.'

Did comics mark your interest in art?

SOMEWHAT. I REMEMBER DOING A DRAWING WHEN I WAS 3 YEARS OLD. IT WAS A GUY HOLDING A LOLLIPOP. I WAS SO HAPPY WITH MYSELF BECAUSE I PUT CRISS-CROSS LINES INTO THE LOLLIPOP AND IT BECAME A TENNIS RACKET AND I WAS JUST LIKE, 'YEAH, I KNOW WHAT I'M DOIN'.'

I WAS ALWAYS DRAWING. FROM AGES SEVEN TO SIXTEEN, THE MAJORITY OF THE WORK I ILLUSTRATED WAS SCIENCE FICTION AND FANTASY TYPE STUFF. WHEN I GRADUATED HIGH SCHOOL MY PARENTS WANTED ME TO BE A COSMETIC SURGEON. I THOUGHT, 'THAT'S NOT A BAD IDEA BECAUSE I GET TO WORK WITH MY HANDS AND MAYBE MAKE BURN VICTIMS BEAUTIFUL AND SCULPT FLESH.' AND I THOUGHT THAT WAS A NOBLE PURSUIT. I REALLY WANTED TO BE A DANCER BUT MY PARENTS WERE LIKE 'NO WAY.' SO THE BEST COMPROMISE BETWEEN COSMETIC SURGEON AND DANCER WAS ARTIST.

Who are your major influences?

JOHN BYRNE, FIRST AND FOREMOST IN THE INDUSTRY. AND THE CONANS DONE BY JOHN BUSCEMA WERE ALSO A BIG INFLUENCE. THEN THERE'S WALT SIMONSON'S THOR AND FRANK MILLER'S RONIN AS WELL AS MOEBIUS, ADAM HUGHES, GEOFF DARROW, AND KATSUHIRO OTOMO. I'M ALSO STILL VERY INFLUENCED BY THE CLASSICAL ARTISTS BECAUSE OF MY BACKGROUND. I LOVE MICHELANGELO, MAXFIELD PARRISH, H.R. GIGER, GUSTAV KLIMT, AND EGON SCHIELE.

Tell me about what led up to your working on X-FORCE.

A WHILE BACK, I LIVED IN ITALY FOR ABOUT A YEAR AND A HALF AND DID NOTHING BUT PAINT. THEN, AFTER RECEIVING MY DEGREE FROM THE RHODE ISLAND SCHOOL OF DESIGN, I REALIZED THAT THERE WAS NO MORE SAFETY NET AND I HAD THIS HUNDRED THOUSAND DOLLAR DEGREE THAT SAYS I CAN DRAW PRETTY PICTURES. AT THIS TIME, I ALSO STARTED TO GET BACK INTO COMICS AND REALIZED THAT I MIGHT WANT TO USE ALL THE THINGS I HAD LEARNED ABOUT ART TO EXPRESS LIFE THROUGH THAT MEDIUM.

I DID SOME WORK HERE AND THERE UNTIL ANNUBIS PRESS LET ME DO A SIX-PAGE STORY CALLED "HARD SACRIFICE." THOSE SIX PAGES GOT ME WORK AT TRIUMPHANT COMICS ON CHROMIUM MAN. THAT GOT ME ON CHARLEMAGNE AT DEFIANT. THEN JEPH LOEB CALLED ME UP AND ASKED IF I WANTED TO DO A FOUR-ISSUE LIMITED SERIES WITH HIM FOR DC. LOOSE CANNON WAS RIGHT UP MY ALLEY. JEPH WAS ALSO THE ONE WHO LATERTOLD ME ABOUT AN OPENING FOR AN ARTIST ON X-FORCE. I SPENT THAT WHOLE WEEKEND DOING SKETCHES OF ALL THE X-FORCE CHARACTERS, THEIR CURRENT UNIFORMS, AND HOW I ENVISIONED THEM. THEN MONDAY MORNING I DROPPED IN AND BOB WAS LIKE, 'OKAY, I'LL GIVE YOU THREE ISSUES.' AT THIS POINT I DON'T THINK THERE'S ANYTHING THAT ANYONE COULD OFFER ME THAT WOULD MAKE ME WANT TO GIVE X-FORCE UP.

"I Don't Think There's Anything That Anyone Could Offer Me...

...That Would Make Me Want To Give X-Force Up."

Sometimes I think, 'My God, I'm drawing Professor X!' All I remember is as a kid I used to imagine being Professor X. I'm very lucky. One is happy enough to draw comics in general but to draw characters that even the layman on the street knows is such a thrill.

The best part is that the New Mutants were invented when I was into comics. I have the graphic novel. I have #1. Out of all of the X-families, I know them best. It's really an honor to be able to draw the characters that I grew up with as well as to redefine them and create their personalities even more exactly. I go to bed giggling sometimes because I can't believe what I'm doing.

When I first met Bob, I was very scared. This guy is the nucleus behind all the X-families! But he's just a nice guy. He's very focused and that's important to me because I'm still new to the industry and I need that kind of guidance. He points me in the right direction. He's willing to listen to a young kid like me who has lots of ideas and he respects where I'm coming from.

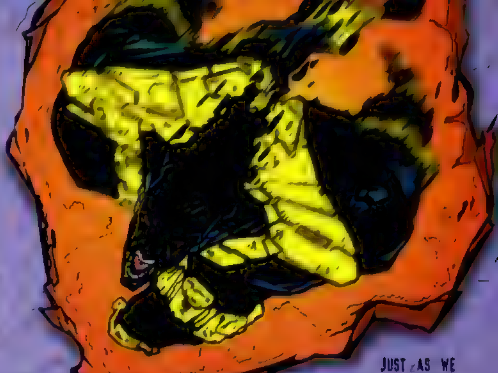
Whoa baby! I guess many people in the industry grew up reading comics and made the transition and evolved in that form. But I went to art school and I never thought of drawing comics. I thought of fine arts in a classical sense so I guess maybe that's where that 'design sense' comes from. I learned what I know from the masters like Michelangelo and I believe that it's not how you draw, it's what you draw: where you place the camera angle, where you put the characters on the page, the body language, the light source, the mood, and all those elements of design. I'm trying to make it all less forced. This way, when we have someone flying or crashing through a wall, it's that much more believable because all the quiet stuff leading up to that was very natural.

I think facial expressions have to convey as much to the reader as the dialogue. They're the essence of storytelling. I take the expression that I'm trying to convey and crank up the volume. I want to constantly work on expressions because I want to be able to make the quiet page, where we get to know the inside of the character, stand out.

Working with Jeph Loeb, we decided to make them more of a team. The first thing about a team is they all look alike so we gave them uniforms. The zippers, clasps, and patent leather make for more of a military look. I like it when I can look at a comic and say, 'You know, I could probably make that outfit but MMMAAANNNN, that looks really cool.' I don't want these characters to be dressed for Halloween though, they're characters for the '90s.

I'm heavily influenced by the environment around me. When I see kids in my neighborhood with bright blue hair, piercings, tattoos, combat boots, and hot pink crew cuts, I want to put that in my pages because the bottom line with X-Force is, these aren't super heroes, these are kids like us that just happen to have special powers.

I'm very happy with where the characters are going right now. I'm really happy with the redesign of Warpath. I've been playing with the idea of giving him a Thunderbird tattoo because we haven't seen his back yet. I think we're also going to develop Siryn, make her stronger—a modern woman. Maybe she'll get a new hairstyle to reflect that.



Just as we change the way we dress and cut our hair from time to time, these characters will hopefully do the same. I want people to look at my characters and say, 'Yo, that's hot, that's cutting edge.' I'd love to date that girl' or 'Man, that guy's really cool.'

What's in store for the future?

What I'd really love to do is throw a few really cool new characters into the mix and keep developing the present ones as well. I'm hoping to bring back Moonstar and Karma to the team somehow. We'll see. There's so much new territory to explore, so much more to say with these characters and I want to say everything. Right now my goal is to work on an unprecedented number of X-Force issues back to back. I'd love to have a definitive run on this book and be thought of as synonymous with the team.

What advice do you have for artists starting out?

First of all, make sure you love it more than anything because it's always an uphill battle. Everyone should just look at the best stuff that's out there and study it because, the more you do that, the more you'll come to realize how much love there is behind the art. For people starting out, my suggestion is one solid page a week. If you've done a page and the week isn't up, go back to it. Eventually you get quicker. Realize what you do best. Work on your weaknesses but don't show them. It's also important to be persistent.

Draw from life. But most importantly, draw, draw, draw. I draw about 10-12 hours a day, 6-7 days a week. In order to do that, you've got to have a lot of lovin' for what you're doing.

X-Man no.14

John Ostrander/Steve Scroce/Bud Larosa

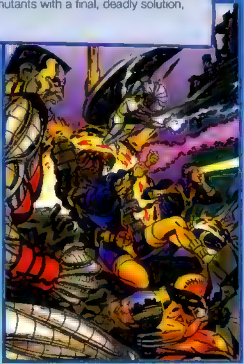
THE CABLE/X-MAN WAR CONTINUES! The most important event yet in the life of the X-Man! Are Cable & Nate the same person? Can Cable's battle experience defeat the most dangerous mutant alive? Find out as the encounter you demanded comes to its dramatic conclusion! Rumor has it, this issue sets a new status quo for both of these mystery mutants! *(Shipping 2/20/96)*

What If? no.84

Cover by Paul Smith

Gerard Jones/Mark Pacella/Dan Panosian

"What if Shard, and not Bishop, had lived?" When Bishop dies in the future, his tough-as-nails sis in the XSE leaps to our time to terminate Fitzroy. Here Shard solves the problem of evil mutants with a final, deadly solution, leading to a confrontation with the X-Men! *(Shipping 2/20/96)*



Uncanny X-Men no.331

Scott Lobdell/Joe Madureira

The X-Men vs. White Queen—the final confrontation! When Xavier's troops clash with the co-leader of Generation X, you know someone's got to give! Another thriller by WIZARD "Top Ten" writer Scott Lobdell and the newly crowned fan favorite, Joe Madureira! *(Shipping 2/6/96)*

Professor X & the X-Men no.6

Fred Schiller/Jan Duursema

Magneto & his Brotherhood of Evil Mutants kidnap the high-flying Warren Worthington! With Professor X down for the count, can the young X-Men save their fallen Angel? It's Mutants in space for less than a buck! *(Shipping 2/13/96)*

X-Force no.53

Jeph Loeb/Adam Pollina

The X-Ternals live! But will their final secret be revealed before they die—and take X-Force with them? Brought to you by Jeph (WOLVERINE/GAMBIT)Loeb & WIZARD "Up and Comer" Adam Pollina, who's interviewed in this very issue of MARVEL VISION! *(Shipping 2/20/96)*

Generation X no.14

Scott Lobdell/Tbd

Guest-starring Bishop! Emplate lashes out—but gets his snout kicked in by the X-Men's time-tossed warrior. Can the dude with the attitude save our new mutant's future? *(Shipping 2/13/96)*

X-Men: Askani'Son no.3 of 4

Scott Lobdell/Gene Ha

Continuing the sequel to THE ADVENTURES OF CYCLOPS & PHOENIX! *(Shipping 2/13/96)*

Cable no.30

Jeph Loeb/Ian Churchill

THE CABLE/X-MAN WAR BEGINS! It's the moment the mutant world has braced for—Nate vs. Cable! This is the collision you clamored for! This is the event that will rock Cable's world! Continued in X-MAN #14! *(Shipping 2/6/96)*

X-Factor no.121

Howard Mackie/Steve Epting/Al Milgrom

Sabretooth prowls the pages of X-FACTOR! Wildchild, Mystique, Polaris & Shard join Forge in his fiercest battle ever! The master inventor must combine his shaman spirituality with his mutant techno power if he hopes to defeat his greatest enemy! Plus: the government has big plans for Sabretooth, and Val Cooper isn't happy! *(Shipping 2/13/96)*

Excalibur no.96

Warren Ellis/Carlos Pacheco/
Bob Wiacek

Carlos Pacheco, the artist of BISHOP, is here—and so is Mountjoy, the villain from BISHOP! You know evil is afoot when the time-tripping terror gathers shapeshifters around him and hatch es a sinister plot *(Shipping 2/20/96)*

The Adventures of the X-Men no.1

Ralph Macchio/Ben Herrera

THE ALL-NEW ADVENTURES OF THE ANIMATED X-MEN—FOR ONLY 99 CENTS! Guest-starring the savage Hulk & X-Factor! The government sends out X-Factor in pursuit of the rampaging green goliath—but standing in their way is the X-Men! Like THE BATMAN & ROBIN ADVENTURES, this series contains new stories that mirror, but do not directly adapt, the hit cartoon—for only 99 cents! *(Shipping 2/13/96)*

X-Men no.51

Mark Waid/Pascual Ferry

MARK WAID'S FIRST ISSUE AS NEW WRITER FOR THE X-MEN! Gambit, Bishop & the decidedly different Beast leap onto a runaway train that's been turned into a horrific testing ground for the cure for the Legacy Virus! Take *Speed*, throw in *Outbreak*, toss in some mutants, and mix with the industry's hottest writer—that's the recipe for one tasty treat! *(Shipping 2/20/96)*

Catch the X

Titles from the X-Men family shipping in February

Storm no.3 OF 4

Warren Ellis/Terry Dodson/Karl Story

Continuing Storm's Marvel Select limited series! Storm discovers the truth behind the terrorism of Gene Nation, Cable discovers why Forge drove Ororo to tears, and we discover how the X-Men's weather wiz can be murdered yet still be alive. Like WOLVERINE/GAMBIT, this adventure delivers the action, introspection & top talent that mark X-Men limited series. *(Shipping 2/20/96)*

UltraForce™

It's a swarm of locusts! It's a flock of seagulls! No, it's *UltraForce*! And they're the newest comic super heroes to touch down in your living room!

With possibly the coolest opening of any cartoon, *UltraForce* invades your home every Sunday morning at 9 A.M. coast to coast (check your local listing for time and location).

Wow! After only a year, Malibu Comics has turned its popular comic book, *UltraForce*, into an animated series. Prime, Hardcase and Prototype join forces to liven up Sunday mornings across the country. With over 130 stations in nearly every market carrying the cartoon, *UltraForce* will soon be a household name!

Rave music, awesome storylines, detailed animation, incredible sound effects and cool super heroes add up to ultra-stimulation! *UltraForce* offers more than just excitement for viewers. While the show is packed with action and adventure, it also deals with some of the quirky hang-ups that young people face. True, super heroes don't have your average, run-of-the-mill problems. But, they are young, inexperienced and unfamiliar with their powers.

"What people will find cool and fun about our characters is that most of them are new to the super hero game," said Malibu Comics President Scott Rosenberg. "They're still coming to grips with their new powers and responsibilities. This is a take on how it really would be if normal people were given super powers."

For UltraForce, their work as a team is a part-time gig. They each have their own thing going on. When Contrary rounds them up to go out and fight the evil in the Ultraverse, they have a hard time getting along. And, teamwork is a concept that they haven't yet mastered! For instance, Prime and Protoype both have huge egos that continually clash. Topaz has to adjust to her new environment where men and women are equals. In fact, a memorable line from one of the shows has Topaz saying, "The Queen of Gwendor does not do floors!"

Ghoul provides comic relief to *UltraForce*. The walking corpse will try and liven things up with a good joke now and then. There's nothing like a funny dead guy to relieve tensions!

Rosenberg talks of the nerdy Kevin Green and his struggle to be Prime, "He wants so bad to be a mighty super hero yet he's only 13 years old and his young emotions get the best of him." Case in point: Prime gets so excited when a conflict arises, he takes off and flies through a wall rather than going out a window or using the door.

UltraForce fans can expect to see Ultraverse villains like Rune, Lord Pumpkin, Boneyard, and Primevil wreaking havoc. Look for episodes to guest star The Night Man, Sludge, and The Strangers.

Malibu has assembled a cool team behind the scenes to develop the show. Joining Rosenberg as Executive Producers are Joe Calamari and Scott Thomas hot off of the *X-Men* show.

Toys Too!?!

The 'Force Is With You

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X-MEN: TM & © 1996 Marvel Entertainment Group, Inc. All Rights Reserved.

WARRIOR SOUL

A woman is having visions. She telepathically "visits" events that will take place in the future. The first takes her to a conversation with a super hero team which she does not yet recognize, in a super hero outfit she has never worn before. Her second is disturbing. She is holding a body. The man in her arms is dead. And she doesn't know who he is. Rina Patel is so distraught by these occurrences that she has to do something about it. She has to find these people who have so disrupted her life.

It takes a lot for Rina to convince the New Warriors that they should listen to her. She has been able to demonstrate that she has superhuman powers and Rina, now Timeslip, forces the young heroes to take her seriously and listen closely. Very closely. Because...

The first vision has already come true.

And the man in her arms in her second vision is Speedball.

"Future Shock," a four-part story line in NEW WARRIORS issues #68-71, will play out Rina's fatal second vision.

Beginning in February, with NEW WARRIORS #68, the Guardians of the Galaxy emerge from the future through a time/space warp to confront the Warriors, one of whom the Guardians believe is the cause of havoc being wrought upon their own time/space continuum. Not standing for having one of their own taken away from them, the New Warriors and Guardians square off. Yes, it's Vance Astro vs. Vance Astrovik! And the Guardians' target is not who you think.

The events pull the Warriors closer to Timeslip's future vision of death. No one can stop it. Not the Guardians, the Sphinx, or Spider-Manwho plays an important role in this complex story line. "When the smoke clears, the Warriors will have made a new enemy in the form of a time-tripping megalomaniac calling himself Advent," says Evan Skolnick, writer of NEW WARRIORS. "Timeslip will become a full-fledged Warrior. And Speedball? Well, you'll just have to read it and see."

Why this major shake-up?

"The Warriors were always near and dear to my heart. It was the book at Marvel I most wanted to write. [And] from what WARRIORS Editor Tom Brevoort has told me, one of the main reasons I got the assignment was that my proposal demonstrated a real affection and respect for these characters. I didn't want to change what the series was about. At the end of issue #50, Speedball asked the musical question, 'What the heck are we going to do with fourteen New Warriors?!'

"Next issue we found out that the original six Warriors plus Rage would be the ones to stay on the 'core' team, while the five rookies would retain their auxiliary status. In other words, the 'new' team was really the old team. After four

years of the same line-up, I had really hoped to see a few of the rookies mixed into the group to help shake things up. The core Warriors had all grown immensely over the past fifty issues, and they had become much more comfortable with themselves and with each other. Great for them, not so great for the series.

"A look at Marvel's other successful team books reveals that their line-ups are constantly changing to keep things interesting. Look at the X-Men, The Avengers, or even the Fantastic Four. So I felt it was time for the Warriors to have a few roster changes, which is what I've been playing with. After #75, we'll have a more permanent line-up which will stay stable for awhile...until the readers (or I) get bored."

Change is rampant at Marvel these days and the NEW WARRIORS have moved into the Spider-verse, an unusual appointment for the group.

"The Warriors are a super-team book that in the past has had associations and interactions with characters from the Avengers, X-Force, the Fantastic Four and practically every other Marvel Universe hero and heroine out there. The Warriors were firmly rooted in the Marvel Universe.

"When you think about it, the NEW WARRIORS' new home actually makes a lot of sense. The Marvel Universe family is full of team books. The AVENGERS and the FANTASTIC FOUR, as well as the upcoming STAR MASTERS to name a few. In this crowd of super hero teams, the Warriors could have easily been lost in the shuffle."

With the move to the Spider-verse and the huge ramifications of "Future Shock," it is certainly not business as usual for the NEW WARRIORS, and Evan is going to make sure that the excitement doesn't stop there. All these changes in NEW WARRIORS can take place successfully, thanks to a steady art team. These days, having an art team on a book for more than four issues at a clip is a definite luxury. A luxury that many writers and fans don't get to enjoy.

"I was delighted when Patrick Zircher was brought on board as penciler for my second issue (#55). I found his style to be exactly right for NEW WARRIORS. Pat's rock-solid storytelling and expressive characterizations were near perfect right out of the gate, while he continues to push his art to be ever more dramatic and

'in your face'!

"Pat and I talk on the phone a lot about the Warriors and we try to help push each other to make the best book we can. There's not a lot of ego on either side of the fence here; I encourage Pat to give me feedback on stories and he often suggests helpful changes, while I feel comfortable letting him know what I think of his work in terms of pencils. The longer Pat and I work together, the more in sync we become, so that by now, he pretty much draws exactly what I was picturing when I wrote the plot.

"Andrew Pepoy came on board full-time as of issue #60, which was nice not only because he's an excellent, reliable inker, but he's also someone I knew when I was an editor at Marvel, and who had always done good work for me. Back then, it seemed like Andrew was always chasing that elusive monthly assignment...I'm glad that the one he landed is the one I'm writing."

With a solid creative team in place, what's in store for the future?

Following the events in "Future Shock," is "The Fatal Frontier," a cosmic saga which will follow up on two major subplots that have been ongoing since NW #60. All the Warriors' cosmic connections will be brought into play for this star-spanning saga: Dire Wraiths and Galadorians (Turbo/Torpedo), Xandarians and the Shi'Ar (Rich Rider/Nova), Kymellians and Snarks (Powerhouse), and maybe even the Badoon (Justice) for good measure! "Final Frontier" runs through NEW WARRIORS #73-75, which will most likely finish up in a double-sized milestone issue.

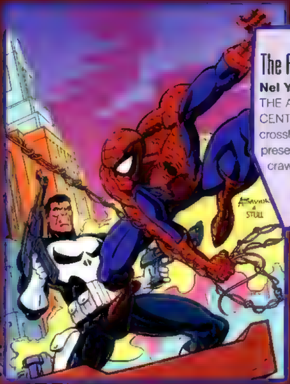
"Simply put," says Evan, "Fatal Frontier' will be the most important Warriors epic ever told, representing more significant character changes and revelations than any previous story line.

"And if you think we can't top that, you don't know us very well. After #75, the series will feature a totally new set-up for the team, with a new leader, a new headquarters, a new status quo and many new members. After over a year of transitional stages, the NEW WARRIORS finally gets the fresh start it deserves!"

- Lia Pelosi

Big Creepy Crawly Spiders

Titles from the Spider-Man family shipping in February



The Adventures of Spider-Man no.1

Nel Yomtov/Alex Saviuk

THE ALL-NEW ANIMATED ADVENTURES OF SPIDER MAN—FOR ONLY 99 CENTS! Here's Spidey as you like him: a swinging single caught in the crosshairs of the Punisher! Like The Batman & Robin Adventures, this series presents new stories which mirror, but do not directly adapt, the wall-crawler's cartoon—and all for only 99 cents! *(Shipping 2/13/96)*

Sensational Spider-Man no.3

Dan Jurgens/Dan Jurgens/Klaus Janson

"Web of Carnage"—Part 1 of 4. THE RETURN OF CARNAGE! The psycho symbiote is on the loose—but Cletus Kasady is still locked up in Ravencroft! What gives? This issue begins a four-part blockbuster in which Spidey risks death—and a fate worse than death—to find the answer! Continued in AMAZING SPIDER MAN #410! *(Shipping 2/6/96)*

New Warriors no.70

Evan Skolnick/Patrick Zircher/Andrew Pepoy

"Future Shock"—Part 3 of 4. His name is Advent, and he's journeyed from tomorrow to end Spider-Man's career today! How can the Warriors stop him when they're trapped in the twisted world of the future? Plus, the sequel of Speedball's death! *(Shipping 2/20/96)*

Spider-Man Press Poster no.219

Painted by Fred Harper

Spidey swings in front of New York City's Chrysler Building in a painting so real you can taste the smog. *(Shipping 2/13)*

Spider-Man no.67

Howard Mackie/John Romita Jr./Al Williamson

"Web of Carnage"—Part 3 of 4. RUN FOR YOUR LIVES, HERE COMES SPIDER-CARNAGE! Spidey's melded with a sinister symbiote and only a hated enemy can stop him! It's Spider-Carnage vs. Kaine—but which one's the good guy?! Continued in next month's SPECTACULAR SPIDER-MAN #233! *(Shipping 2/20/96)*

Spider-Man & the X-Men Team-Up Tpb

Various

Collecting the coolest meetings of the wall crawler and the mighty mutants! Spidey tag-teams with the likes of Wolverine, Nightcrawler, Cyclops & the Beast! It's 176 pages of webs and claws by creators such as Peter David, Stan Lee, John Romita, J.M. DeMatteis and more! *(Shipping 2/27/96)*

Untold Tales of Spider-Man no.8

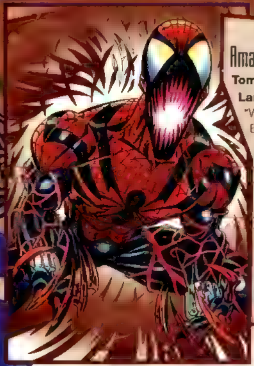
Kurt Busiek/Pat Oliffe/Al Vey

Spidey's going buggy trying to stop the crime spree of the Enforcers! The last thing he needs is to run head-long into the Headsman—an all new villain with ties to one of Spidey's classic foes! "UNTOLD TALES" recaptures the magic that got fans like me hooked on Marvel comics in the first place. The style is modern but the approach is classic. Definitely recommended" (Tony Isabella, Comics Buyer's Guide). *(Shipping 2/13/96)*

Green Goblin no.7

Tom DeFalco/Scott McDaniel/Derek Fisher

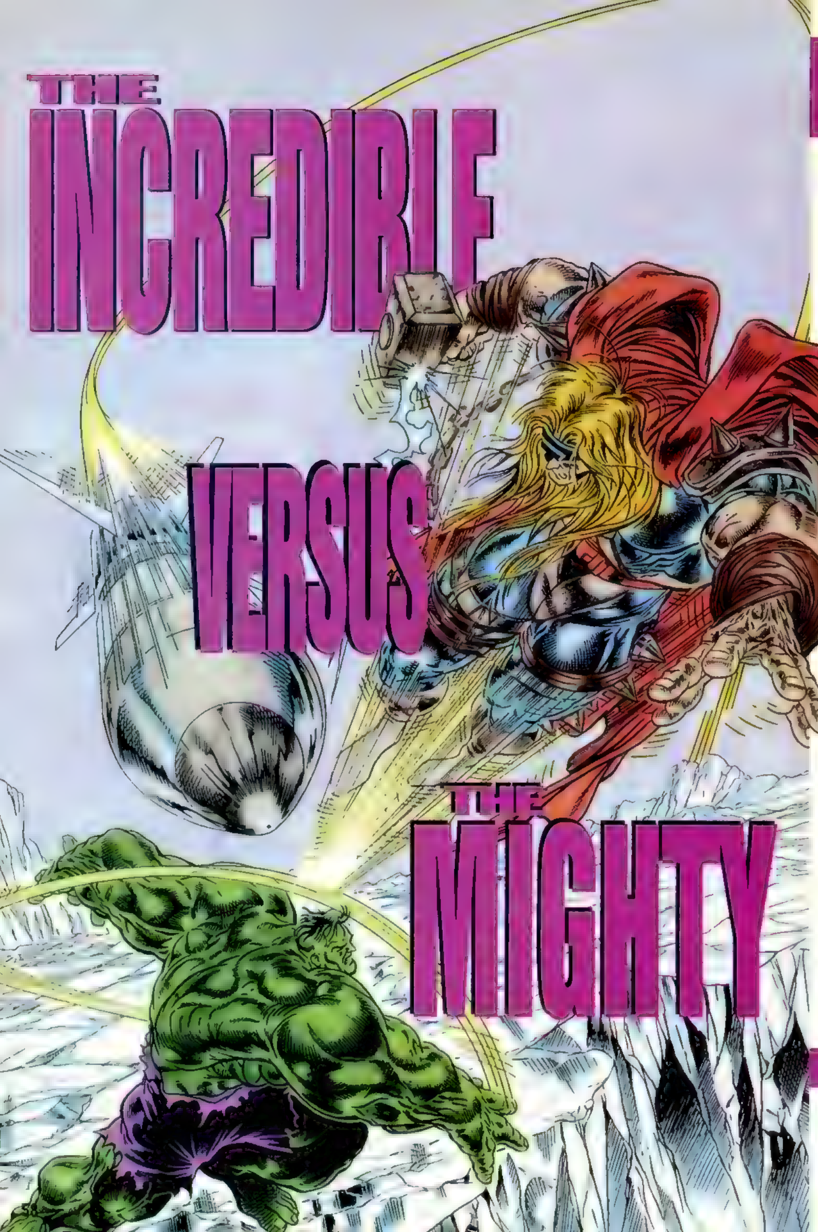
He's the ultimate collector—the Steel Slammer—and Phil Urich has something he must have—the Green Goblin's life! *(Shipping 2/20/96)*



Amazing Spider-Man no.410

Tom DeFalco/Mark Bagley/Larry Mahlstedt

"Web of Carnage"—Part 2 of 4. THE BIRTH OF SPIDER-CARNAGE! While Cletus rots in jail, the sick symbiote is carving up The Big Apple! The only way for Spidey to stop it is to combine with it and become—the amazing Spider-Carnage! Continued in SPIDER-MAN #67! *(Shipping 2/13/96)*



THE INCREDIBLE VERSUS THE MIGHTY

By Polly Watson

Editors in the Marvel Edge offices are battening down the hatches in preparation for the winter of '96, when February roars out like a lion-pumped full of anabolic steroids and heralds the explosive arrival of INCREDIBLE HULK #440. This eagerly anticipated, brain-blistering issue does for comics what salsa does for nachos—everything! "Double Deal" concludes the fantastically twisted "Ghosts of the Future" storyline, kicks off an AVENGERS crossover, and signifies a major change in both the continuity and the character of the INCREDIBLE HULK!

If it sounds like this standard-sized issue packs more heat than the Human Torch at a pig roast, more action than a lion cage at feeding time, think again, pal—it's twice that hot! This is a gonzo, once-in-a-live-fast-die-young-kinda-lifetime blowout—and YOU're invited to the festivities!

WHEN: Well, the whole story line takes place in the here-and-now of the Marvel Universe, but the book actually hits the stands in late February.

WHERE: Why, the frozen north, of course! Think "Frankenstein," think neck-deep snow, think house-sized ice-cubes, think sled dogs living off the corpses of Arctic explorers!

WHO: When you're invited to a party, you always like to know who's gonna be there so you can decide what to wear, when to arrive, and whom to snub, right? We don't think you're gonna wanna turn up your nose at any of these guys though....

- The lovable Lou Ferrigno look-alike's been through the wringer as of late. Fans who've been following the "Ghosts of the Future" story line know that he's carrying enough shrapnel in his brain to set off an airport metal detector (and the guard sleeping next to it) from a distance of two hundred yards! No cheap stuff for the man in green—that's good quality, U.S. Army shrapnel!

Following a thwarted attempt to remove the offending material via home surgery, our hero has morphed into his future form—that of the Maestro! That's right, he's smarter, he's madder, and he's the same color of green as those nasty pimiento-stuffed olives that middle-aged men cram into their martinis after a rough day at the office. Look out!

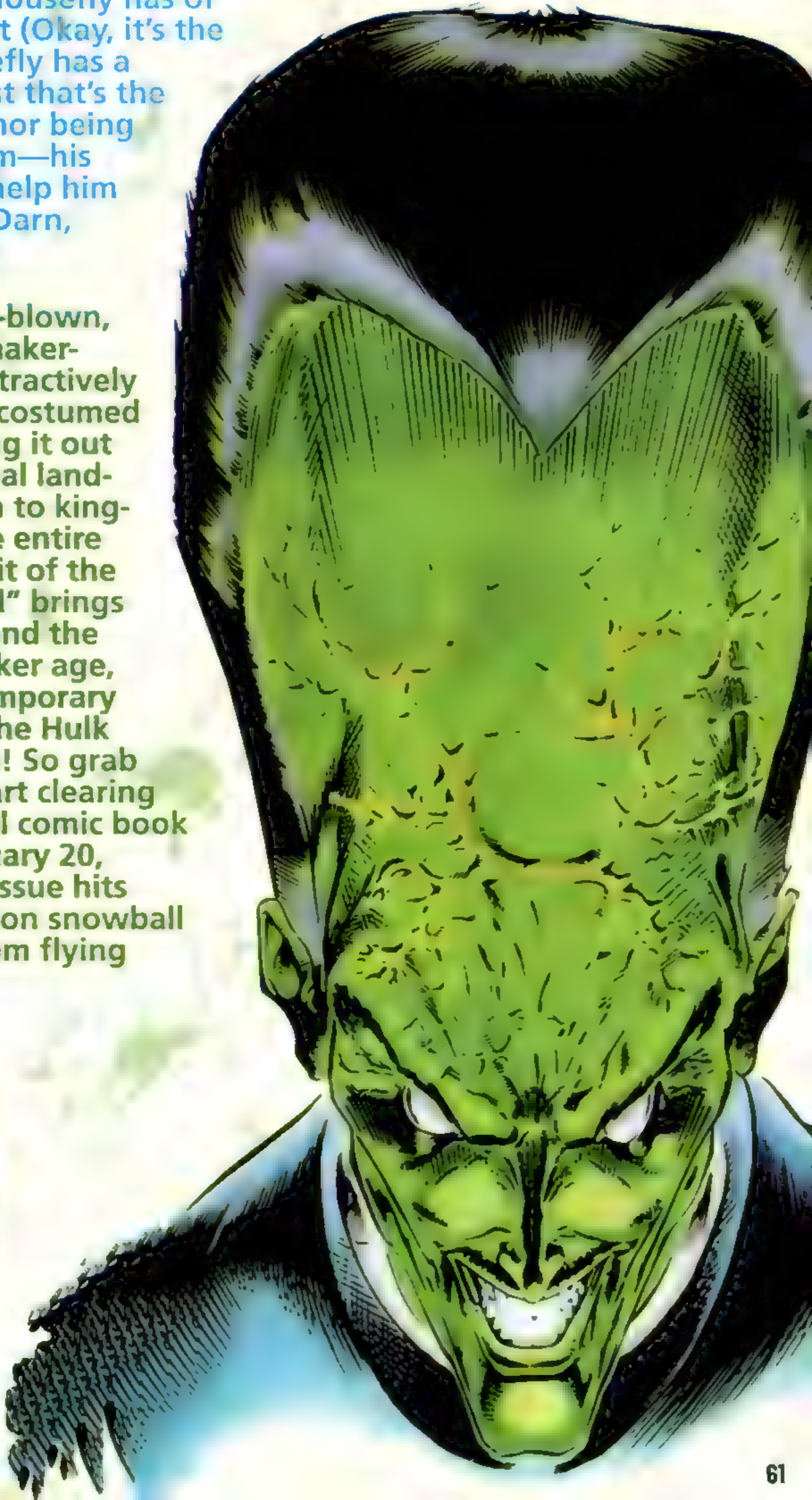
The Leader - No, your punch wasn't spiked, it's true! He's back! The man with the king-sized melon is alive, well, and planning to blow all us humans and our pitiful grape-sized craniums off the face of the earth! Despite a physique which bears a startling resemblance to the cheaper brand of pipe-cleaner, this guy is armed and dangerous! He's packing not only serious brain, but enough explosives to blow up most of Australia! Preferring more populated targets, the evil genius (operating under the terrorist moniker, "the Alliance") has already laid waste to the Kremlin, the Chrysler Building, and Mt. Rushmore! Hey, that's a good picnic area—somebody stop him!

Major Matt Talbot - The awfully vengeful nephew of Colonel Glenn Talbot (the Army stiff that Betty wisely threw over in favor of Bruce Banner and his Gamma-irradiated pocket protector). He's convinced that the Hulk is a major threat to national security, so he's not awfully surprised when the Maestro takes credit for "the Alliance's" terrorist actions. Talbot's already kicking himself for letting the green Casanova escape once, so he's redoubling his efforts. If you've seen "Crimson Tide," you know those nutso commando-types don't give up without some kind of fistfight and a few misplaced gunshots!

The Avengers

Back when most of us were still eating our dinner with a rubber-coated spoon, Hulk was a member of the Avengers. Well, it's 1996 and those days are gone! Reluctantly believing him to be responsible fo the Alliance's terrorism, the powerful team

take it upon themselves to stop the clearly crazed Hulk/Maestro before he destroys somthing truly irreplaceable, like a Gap outlet store. Hottest of all on the snowy trail is Thor. The hunky god of thunder has been taking quite a beating in the pages of his own book lately, and has about the same chance of overcoming the Hulk in hand-to-hand combat as a dead housefly has of becoming president (Okay, it's the nineties. The housefly has a better chance.). But that's the beautiful part of Thor being a member of a team—his pals are bound to help him out....aren't they? Darn, it's just so exciting!



BOTTOM LINE: Full-blown, tear-jerking, pacemaker-bus-ting action! Attractively (if not impossibly) costumed super heroes duking it out on ice floes, national landmarks being blown to kingdom come, and the entire U.S. Army in pursuit of the Hulk! "Double Deal" brings the end of an era and the beginning of a darker age, and heralds the temporary disappearance of the Hulk from his own book! So grab that shovel and start clearing a path to your local comic book store around February 20, because once this issue hits the stands, a two-ton snowball couldn't keep it from flying off the racks!

MARVEL® EDGE

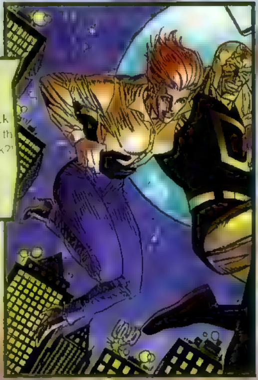
Walk on the edge

Titles from the Edge family shipping in February

Daredevil no.351

J.M. DeMatteis/Ron Wagner/Bill Reinhold

The original fun-loving, swashbuckling Man Without Fear is back! After the events of #350, DD begins his new life at ground zero with Foggy, Karen Page, the yellow and red suit—and Matt Murdock?! Swing onboard the issue sets the stage for the future of DD *(Shipping 2/6/96)*



Incredible Hulk no.340

Peter David/Angel Medina/Robin Riggs

Ghosts of the Future"—Part 5 of 5. The savage storyline concludes! It's ultra violence time when the Hulk stands his ground in the frozen tundra and dukes it out with Thor and a thermo-nuclear bomb! Even if you were snoozin', don't miss the blow out that blasts the slate clean for the next stage in the life of the Hulk. It's so explosive the fall-out falls into next month's AVENGERS #397! *(Shipping 2/20/96)*

Incredible Hulk Press Poster no.220

Painted Chris Moeller

The big green galoot rescues his main squeeze in this pectoral pumping painted print! *(Shipping 2/12/96)*

Ghost Rider no.72

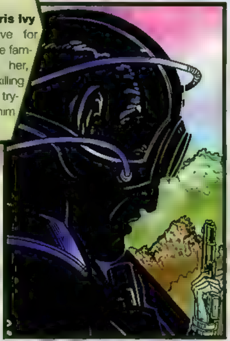
Ivan Velez Jr./Salvador Larroca/Sergio Melia

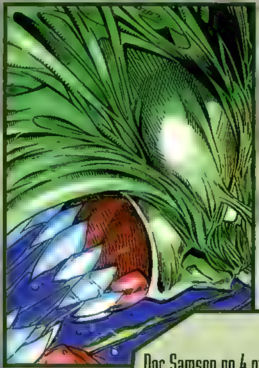
Ghost Rider's greatest villain returns! Someone is snuffing out underworld wiseguys with hellfire—has GR become a murderer? Plus, John Blaze returns as things heat up as the Spirit of Vengeance revs up for issue #75! The sizzling Salvador Larroca is now joined by writer Ivan (Static) Velez Jr. *(Shipping 2/12/96)*

Punisher no.6

John Ostrander/Pat Broderick/Chris Ivy

The Russian mafia makes a move for Punisher's mob by kidnapping the crime family's youngest daughter! To rescue her, Punisher has to dismantle the mutant-killing cyborg known as Firefox. Frank keeps trying to get out, but they keep pulling him back in! (Shipping 2/20/96)





Doc Samson no.4 of 4

Dan Slott/Roberto Flores/Dan Panosian

X-Factor's Polaris guest-stars in the dramatic conclusion to Samson's series! Doc faces certain death at the hands of a serial killer who can absorb gamma powers! Time for a little help from his friends Polaris & Geiger! It's more green hair than you can shake a bottle of peroxide at! *(Shipping 2/20/96)*

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS...

On the Chin

fabian nicieza (nee-see-eh-sa.)

The answers to Fabian's most Frequently Asked Questions:

A) Nee-see-eh-sa. That's how it's pronounced. Period.

Now, FAQ #2 requires a longer and slightly less irreverent answer. The question asked by so many people that I felt it warranted a larger forum than a one-on-one convention conversation.

The question is, "How can I break into writing comics?"

B) Breaking into comics as a writer for one of the major companies is IMPOSSIBLE unless you have one of SIX KEYS to get your foot in the door of the company.

#1) GET A STAFF JOB AT A MAJOR COMPANY AND WORK FROM THE INSIDE

It worked for Peter David, myself and for a score of other writers. I had heard of a job opening at Marvel. I applied. I got the job. Then I did something very rare for me — I shut up. I listened. And I learned. I didn't try to submit my fifty-part X-Men limited series my first week on the job (I'm not joking, people have tried doing that). I just did my work and waited. Two years later, walking through the halls, Bob Budiansky, who knew I was interested in writing, asked me if I had any ideas for a New Universe book called PSI-FORCE. "Sure." That night, I read the first few issues. He bought some of my pitches. Slowly, I went from there. Be advised that having a job at a company in no way ensures that you will break in as a writer. Getting a staff job is only a key which gets your foot in the door.

#2) KNOW SOMEONE WITH A STAFF JOB AT A MAJOR COMPANY

Nothing wrong with cultivating contacts or friendships. If you have a friend who is in a position to buy your work or show it to those who do the buying, then develop and use those contacts. How do you establish those relationships? By being lucky enough to live near them, meet them at local stores, etc. In this age of electronic communications, more professionals are accessible to discuss their work. Be advised, don't flood comic professionals with E-Mail. I only answer about 1/5 of the E-Mail I get because if I answered all of it, I'd have no time to do my work, much less have a real life.

#3) KNOW SOMEONE WHO IS AN ARTIST CURRENTLY WORKING IN COMICS

Nothing wrong with riding someone else's coattails as long as they don't mind. If you know someone who is consistently selling their work within the industry, try to see if they'd like to try and help you get your foot in the door by pitching a story together. Be smart about your attempt. Start small.

#4) BE AN ARTIST CURRENTLY EMPLOYED WHO WANTS TO WRITE

What editor would have been dumb enough to say "No" to John Byrne, Frank Miller, Walt Simonson, Todd McFarlane, Jim Lee, Erik Larsen, Dan Jurgens, etc., when they had asked to write (I'm sure there was an editor or two who might have said no, but if they had done so at the peak of the artist's popularity, then they were pretty stupid editors). Do I think all good artists make good writers? Yeah, sure, like all good writers make good artists. Ultimately, the question is, does their success as an artist allow them some leverage in trying to write, and the answer, obviously, is yes. As it should be! Some of them learn it's not as easy as they thought it would be. Others prove to be even better writers than they are artists. Makes chumps like me wish I'd taken more art classes.

#5) BUILD A BODY OF WORK OUTSIDE OF THE COMICS FIELD

Logically, you would be better able to get your foot in the door if a comic book editor knows your name from your published novels, newspaper and magazine articles, or screenplays. Do you think if Stephen King called Ralph Macchio up tomorrow wanting to write a Captain America Special that he'd say no? Duh. So why would anyone successful in those fields of publishing want to write comics? I don't know. Ask Harlan Ellison, Andrew Vachss, Alan Brennert, Denny O'Neil, Neil Gaiman, Joe Lansdale, or any of the others who wanted to write comics while successful in other fields. I think it's 'cause the job can be more ego-gratifying and reader-responsive than other types of writing. And most important of all, working in comics is FUN!

#6) BUILD A BODY OF WORK IN COMICS AT SMALLER PUBLISHERS

Admittedly, this one used to be easier in the past than it is now. When Mike Baron built up *Nexus*, or Gerry Jones worked on *The Trouble With Girls*, editors at the larger companies paid attention. This was exceptional work being done by obviously talented writers. Would those same exact "neophyte" writers have been able to sell those same exact properties to the larger companies at that time? Probably not. It's the ol' Catch-22. You can't get the work until you get experience, but you can't get the experience unless you get a chance to do the work.

Those are the six keys that I have been able to identify in order to break into writing comics for the major companies. I have yet to hear (and would be more than happy to hear) of any other methods. It is vitally important to stress that getting your foot in the door will not automatically guarantee you success. It has often been said that selling your second job is harder than selling your first! How you conduct yourself on a social and professional basis is as important as your actual talent. I've seen lots of very talented individuals, both writers and artists, who were incapable of getting work because their interpersonal skills were, shall we say, lacking. I would also suggest having a life and frame of reference outside of comics. As I've grown older, my conversations with editors have evolved from music, television, movies, or sports to getting married, raising our children, and mowing our lawns. Of course we talk about comics, but if that were all we talked about, we'd be pretty pathetic. Don't say it...

Anyway, I've avoided writing a column like this because the last thing in the world I want is to position myself as the guy every wannabe writer comes to for help. Believe me, I'm saying this with no malice. Quite frankly, I don't need the competition. So don't E-Mail me with your great X-Men ideas! I don't want to read them. I DO NOT CARE. It's just that after you've been asked the same questions several thousand times by honest, decent people, you start to feel a certain sense of responsibility towards giving them an equally honest and decent answer. I hope this column accomplished that. Take it for what it's worth. Be realistic about your chances. Be civil about your attempts to achieve your goals. And most importantly-- start pronouncing my name right!!

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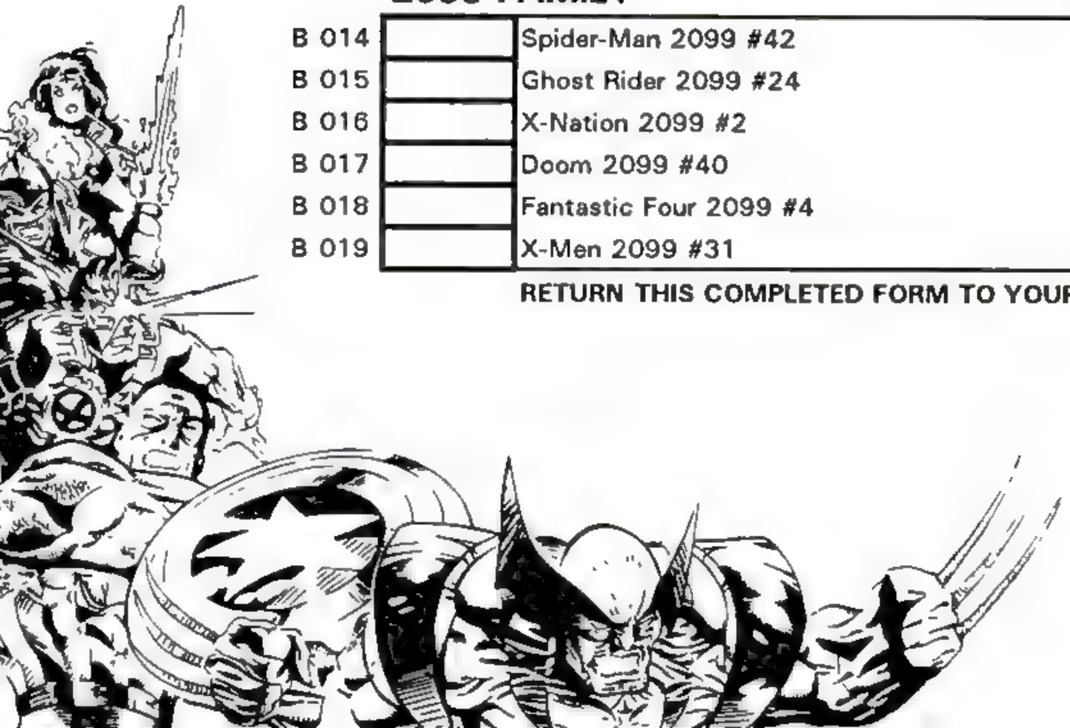

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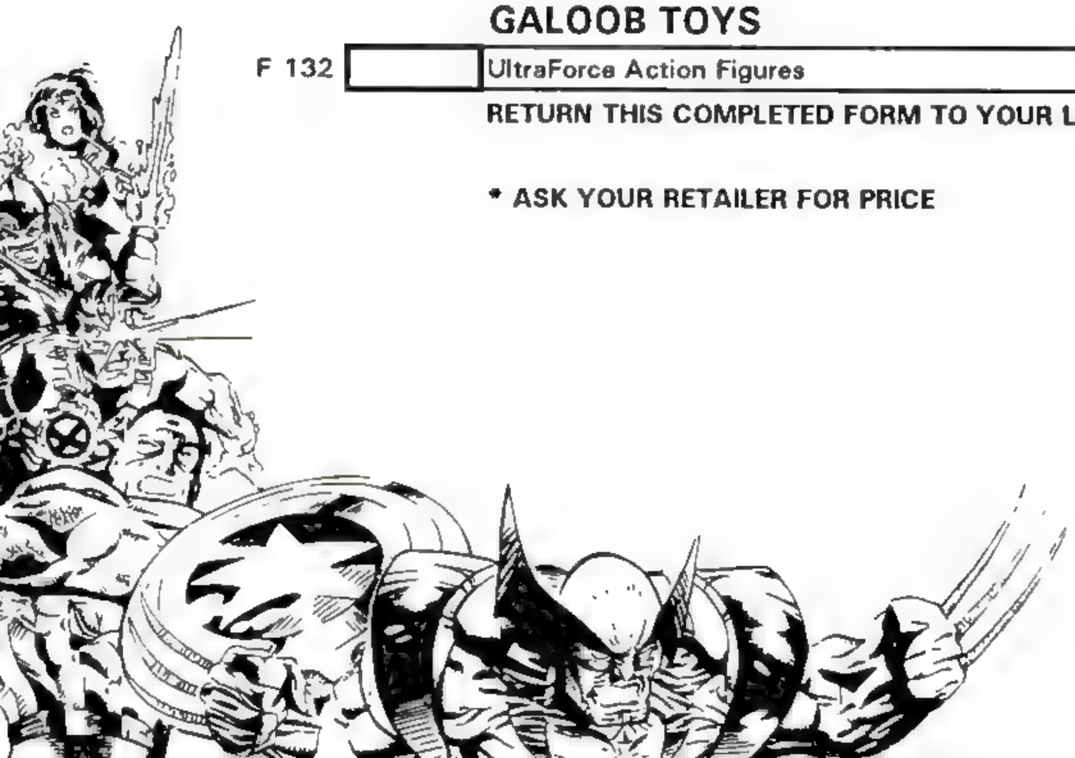

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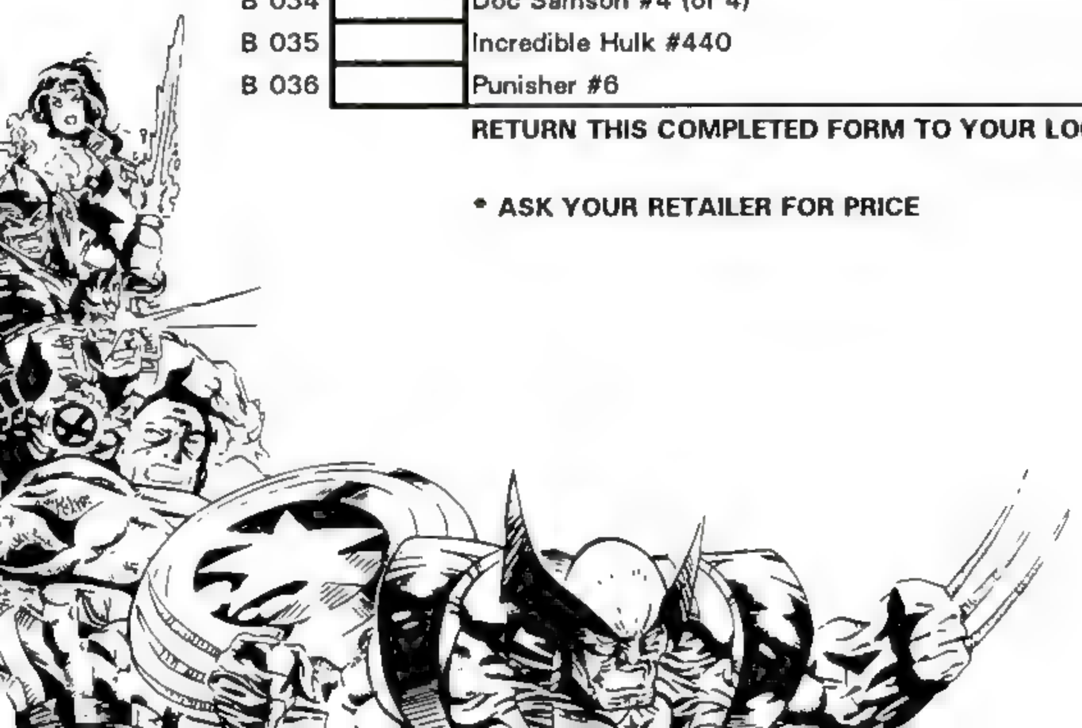

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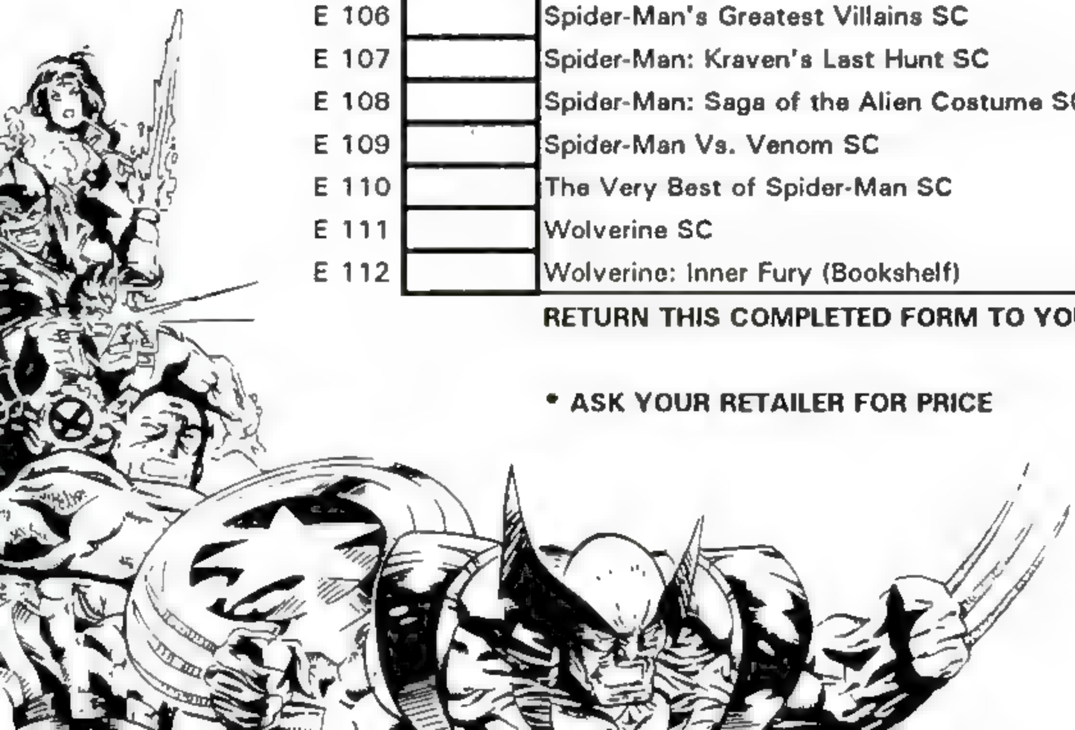

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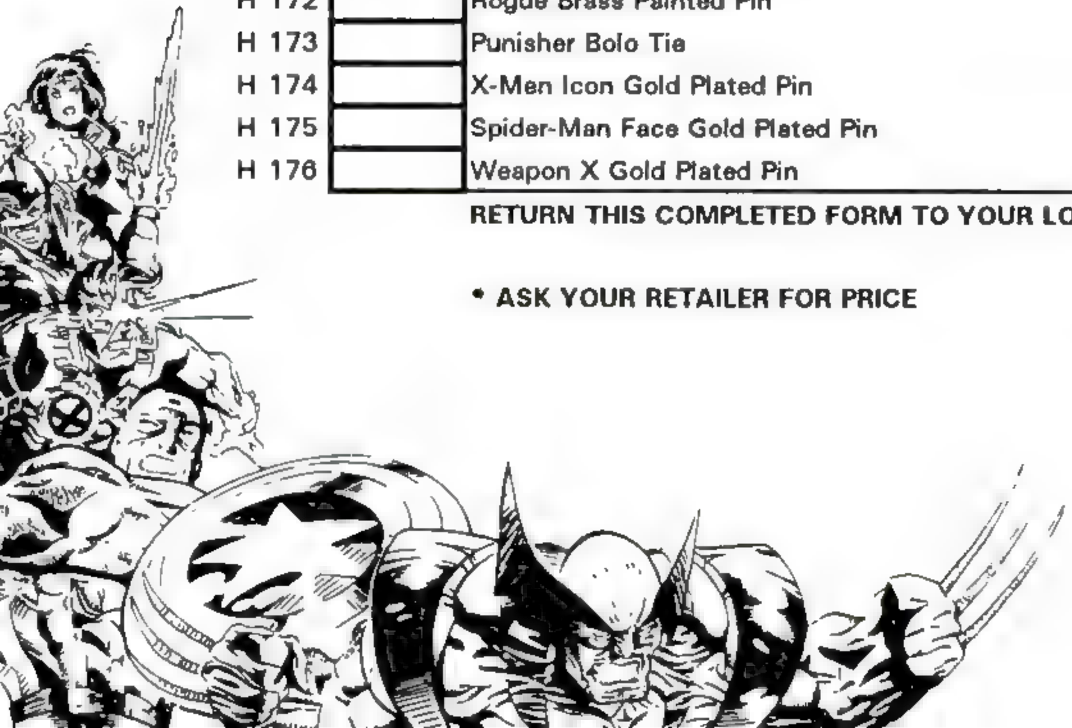

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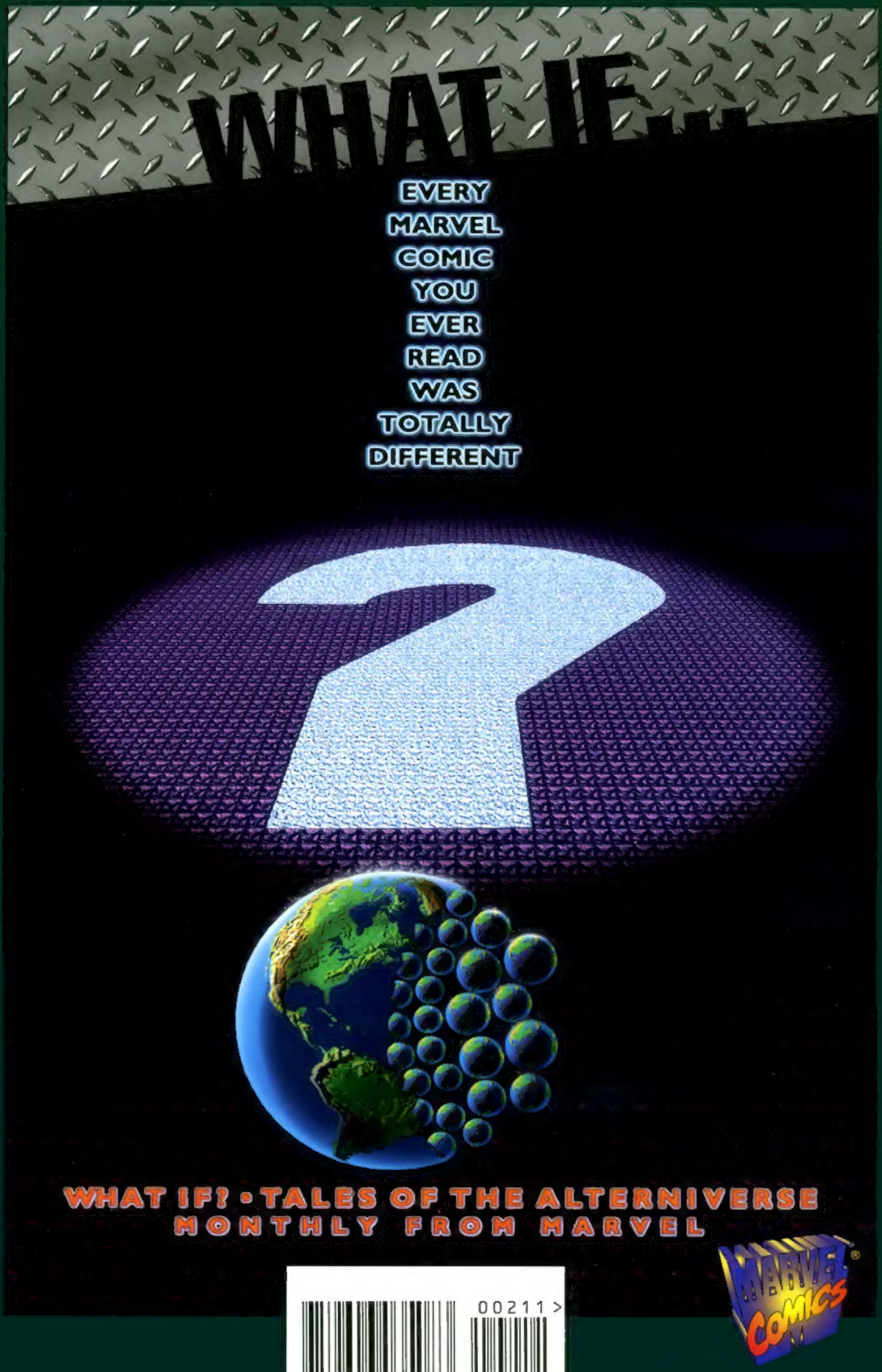

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